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[THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.]

EMERALD AND RUBY,
WITH A
DIAMOND HEART.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Golden Apple," "Miss Arlingcourt's Will," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXI.

ANDREW COURTNEY drove away from Mrs. Black's. His heart was gay and light, the future shone out brilliantly before him. Only the day before, Captain Mathew had said to him in his honest, candid way: "I don't think it is right for me to be keeping a young fellow like you out of work, Andrew; but I can't bear to let you go. You seem to be the nearest of kith and kin left to us, and we are getting old. I don't mind owning that, supposing other hopes fail, we shall adopt you as our heir. But there's time enough for that to be decided—time enough. What seems right is for me to put you in the way of independence. I'm going to talk with the old firm, and if you think you can interest yourself in that business, I'll buy a share for you. They'll admit a junior partner, if I ask it. What do you think of the idea?"

"Admirable—admirable!" had Andrew answered with all his heart. "Only you are too generous to me."

"There is no one else to claim it," sighed the old captain. "I own it seems hard that there shouldn't be one to inherit my earnings who has a drop of kindred blood in his veins. But you are my wife's relative, Andrew, and that's the next best. If only I hadn't been so harsh with poor Lizzie! Alack, perhaps it's Heaven's punishment for my hot-headed anger. I should be so thankful now, if there was a child—any sort of a child that had a look of my father or my mother in its face. But it could not have been, or she would have written to me—she wouldn't have died without sending her child to me. She knew I wasn't so unjust as that."

These last words he had muttered to himself with a weary, troubled look on his face.

But Andrew, with his ready tact, had coaxed him out of the melancholy humour, and taken him back to hopes and plans for himself.

"If such a thing should come, sir—of course I mean after you have proved and found me worthy—I would take your name; my own has no special attraction for me, and my father has lost most of his interest in me, through the machinations of this second wife; and besides, he has three other sons of hers. I would take your whole name, or," he added, the last hesitatingly, not knowing how much the bereaved father could yet bear, "that of your son."

The idea seemed to please Captain Mathew exceedingly. He brightened up into eagerness.

"Upon my word, Andrew, I like that idea very much. It would be something—yes, it would be a great deal—to leave a Robert Nickerson behind me."

"You have only to decide upon it, sir."

And Captain Nickerson had posted off, to consult with his old partners, full of eager enthusiasm in the project.

Therefore Andrew Courtney's heart was gay and triumphant. He drove over to town to pick up his benefactor on his way from the shipping-house, and hearing there that Captain Mathew had gone home to dine with the senior, he lounged down to the wharf. A ship was just coming up, a foreign ship, for she carried a Portuguese flag. Hitherto all his professed interest in ships had been feigned, to meet Captain Mathew's approval. It was another thing, now that he was going to be a partner in the old shipping-house. He began to look at the graceful outlines of the ship with newly-awakened eyes, and watched, with something like a boy's eagerness, all the shifting movements and the bustle attending the mooring of a newly-arrived craft.

"I wonder how many Captain Mathew has an interest in?" he mused. "Only to think that I shall one day own them all!"

And he edged a little nearer, dreamily querying as he watched two of the officers come leaping over to

the wharf, what sort of a sensation it must be to have been so long drifting over the waves, out of sight of the green earth, and then once more setting one's feet on the solid land.

The sailors, upon the ship's deck, were jabbering like so many magpies. There was running to and fro, rough jests, but jollity and hilarity everywhere. The shore officials hustled and scolded, but laughed between. And Andrew began to catch something of the exhilarating spirit of the scene, and still pressed nearer. It was then that he discovered a face and figure that seemed a contradiction to the rest, tall, spare, skeleton figure wrapped in the most wretched rags, a pale, cadaverous, ghastly face, with listless, soulless eyes.

Something gave him a chill when he looked, but his attention was still more closely riveted when one of the sailors led the poor fellow slowly down the plank, and put him safely upon a cask for a sitting place. Then the heedless eyes suddenly brightened, a quick flush went over the whole face which should have been fresh and rosy—for it must have been in the very prime of manhood—the man started up, looking straight up the wharf to the door of the shipping-house where Andrew had tied his horse, the horse that had once belonged to Captain Mathew's lost son.

"Home!" exclaimed he, and was hurrying forward as fast as he could go.

"Hold, friend," laughed the sailor. "I'll go with you on the trip. This is a queer dodge, anyhow. I do believe he knows what he's about," he added, looking about for one of his messmates.

"What is it?" questioned Andrew.

"Why, this fellow. We call him Nep, because he came aboard such a queer way. He's simple, you know, or something else. I shouldn't wonder if we found out something about him at this port, for we all watched him, and he seemed to know everything we passed. And at one place he acted queer enough—down below, before we came into the harbour. He looked off to the shore, and pointed, laughed, and then he cried, and all he kept saying was:

"The Happy Harbour! the Happy Harbour! The others couldn't make it out, but I could. I'm an Englishman myself, if you do find me in a Portuguese crew."

Andrew Courtney whirled about and stared at the poor sickly-looking man. He turned pale for a moment, and then muttered between his teeth:

"How preposterous! how impossible—utterly impossible!"

But of the sailor he asked, in an indifferent tone:

"How did the poor fellow come on board your ship?"

"That's the queer thing, sir. We picked him up, all alone, without any clothing but his woollen shirt, swimming there on the wide ocean. I was the one that spied him first, and we lowered a boat and went to him. He was pretty near gone, but had sense enough to float instead of wasting strength buffeting about. When we got him aboard he was different from now. He had his mind, for he said to the captain: 'Take care of me, whatever port you land at, you shall have reward. I feel my sense going. My name is—' And what do you think—the Portuguese lubbers couldn't make out, and he had hardly got it out before he tumbled down like a log. And then, for days and days we tended him, he laying in the hammock with eyes shut, and never a sensible word. And every morning we expected to hear that he had gone to Davy Jones's locker, and every night we said it would be the poor fellow's last. The captain didn't have the interest he would be done if he'd been one of his own nation, and it kinder fell to me to look after him as being the only countryman we had aboard, for we all made sure he was an Englishman. By-and-bye I began to see he would make a live of it, but I didn't think it would be such a feeble makeshift as this. His mind is gone, I should say, though maybe good nursing may do something for him. We've had a hard passage and allowances provided, and it's little enough care he got at the boat. Since he's been about on deck he's been, as you see, moping and still. I've tried and tried to get something sensible out of him, but it's no use."

"And you don't know where he came from, nor what is his name? How very strange!"

"There was a handkerchief tied tight round his neck, and it had a mark. I saved it carefully, and it's what I hope to find his friends by. I mean to take him to a hospital, and advertise the case."

"Let me see the handkerchief," said Andrew, in the voice of one holding some lawyer at bay.

"I've got it in my pocket now," answered the sailor.

And he pulled it out with the accompaniment of half-a-dozen pieces of tobacco, a knife, a coil of wire, and sundry other articles.

Andrew took it, held up the yellow rag to the light, and exclaimed, hoarsely:

"Good heavens!"

"Well, you don't say you know him—now, do you?" demanded the sailor, eagerly.

Andrew Courtney's heart was thumping wildly in his breast, the very ground beneath him seemed sinking beneath him. His blood ran cold, and left his feet and hands like ice, but he kept his voice calm, and answered in what the sailor thought a very natural manner.

"I believe I do. It must be my own cousin. We believed him dead. Poor—poor Richard Nason! Can it indeed be you?"

"Richard Nason! Well, that takes in the letters on the handkerchief. Poor fellow, I'm glad he's found his own! I'll run and tell the captain."

Andrew's hand was in his pocket, slowly drawing forth his pocket-book, his mind was darting with lightning rapidity over the different phases of the situation.

"Stay," said he, coolly, the colour slowly coming back to his face. "I can't talk with the captain now, I am too anxious to get this poor creature into better clothing before his friends find him. Here is something to reward you for your kindness and trouble. I will come down to-morrow, and see you again. Don't noise this story about, for his family is a respectable one, and they will feel terribly distressed by it. I'll take him away with me, and see you again to-morrow."

"All right. Good-bye, Nap. I beg pardon, sir, you see we've got used to calling him so."

Andrew did not stop to answer. He drew the arm of the forlorn, miserable creature through his, and hurried as fast as those tottering steps could follow up the wharf towards the carriage. All the time his quick, keen eyes were devouring the space before them. No, there were no gentlemen before the office-door. He gave a gasp of relief, and fairly hustled into the carriage, as he would have bundled in a box or package, the silent wreck which hung upon him.

When they were dashing up the street, Andrew

turned and looked into the thin, white, attenuated face, though he felt little thrills of chilly horror stealing through every vein as he did so.

He was smiling softly.

"What is your name?" demanded Andrew.

"Go on, Donna," feebly cried the man, looking only at the horse.

Andrew groaned, and lifted one hand to brush away the chilly dew that gathered on his forehead.

"Go where?—where are you going?" he demanded again, in a sterner voice.

The smile dropped off, and instead came a look of bewilderment and growing pain. The poor creature lifted up his emaciated hands, and clasped them tightly across his forehead.

It was evident that the slightest agitation shook off any faint clue the poor weak brain could hold upon the past. He began to moan, and rock to and fro wildly. And when Andrew spoke again, sharply commanding him to be still, he sat cowering and trembling, and only calmed down to become apathetic and stupid as his companion had seen him at first.

That companion's face was growing settled in expression. The lips were set into a hard, cold decision; there was a fierce glitter in his eye; he held the reins with an iron grasp.

He drove swiftly, only pausing once to enquire the way, and he made a pause at length on the outskirts of the town before an asylum for the insane. He led in his companion, found the superintendent in his office, and told a fair, glib story.

His cousin, a rather worthless fellow, but yet his cousin, had been off at sea in foreign countries, and drunk himself nearly dead. It was pretty positive his mind was hopelessly gone. He would be likely to be a life patient. He must be carefully and kindly treated, and the remuneration for his severe residence there should be paid generously, and in advance. His name was Richard Nason.

If the case could be kept quiet it would be an accommodation, as the young man's conduct had been a great mortification to his family. He laid some emphasis upon its being a life case. He knew how such cases were treated by these private asylums.

The doctor was very polite and considerate to the gentleman.

"And clothing?" suggested he, mildly.

Andrew drew out his pocket-book hastily, and flung it on the table.

"Take it, and make him comfortable. Advise me—if there should be the slightest chance of his reason returning. There is my cash."

And in two minutes more he was gone, driving back to town in hot haste and desperate mood.

Captain Mathew had waited some time, and looked rather astonished at Donna's recking side.

"I buried her," apologised Andrew. "I have had an unpleasant adventure. I found a cousin of mine hustled about in a crowd of sailors, stark mad, I should judge, and I carried him down to the asylum. I hope you were not inconvenienced by waiting."

"No—oh, no! I'm glad you've a feeling heart for your relatives. I tell you, Andrew, it's hard to make up for the loss of your own flesh and blood. There's a tie in kinship that holds faster than we dream until it is proved to us."

And poor old Captain Mathew's sore heart vented in a deep, deep sigh.

Andrew's hands were clenched fiercely upon the reins. He answered not a word.

And presently, Captain Mathew thinking him grieving over his cousin's trouble, brightened out of his own pensive mood, to cheer his companion.

"Well, Andrew, I've talked it all over with them, and they're willing, though they wouldn't hear of it till I told them how you were to take Bob's place, and his name too, perhaps. That brought them round. But there's nothing settled about that until I talk with my wife. Women have queer little notions, and she may not be willing that there should be more than one Robert Nickerson."

Andrew shivered a little, but laughed it off.

"I declare I'm cold on this pleasant day. I must have taken a chill on the wharf. I can't say that I admire your tarry odours, captain. The wharf wasn't so enticing as Mrs. Nickerson's garden."

"You'll come round to that when you're more amongst it. But I don't want to make a sailor of you. The Lord knows I don't want that."

"You have told me about his death before. He died of ship fever at sea, you said?" observed Andrew, his face averted.

"Alack—my only son! yes, Andrew."

"Who of that ship's company are in these parts?"

"None now, as I know of. Atkins is in the Indies, and the rest scattered."

Not another word was spoken. Each was lost in

reverie, and only roused at the gateway of the "Happy Harbour."

CHAPTER XXII.

DAMER farm was now, of course, far too narrow a sphere for the lofty spirit of Mr. Joe, or the soaring fancy of the fair Araminta. Their mother gone, the great fortune left to an equal division between them, there was nothing to hinder them from any folly or extravagance they might choose to perpetrate. It did seem as if prodigal Fortune, in a wanton mood, had resolved to overwhelm them with her golden favours. The income, for the first month, even of their per centage of the yield, was enormous. They could scarcely be blamed for acting and feeling as if they had come into possession of inexhaustible riches.

They both proceeded promptly to the metropolis, and established themselves in princely quarters. To do her justice, Araminta really kept the steadiest head, and exposed herself to less ridicule and contempt than her brother. She hired a French dressing maid, but Mademoiselle Amalie reckoned without her host when she thought to twist her *parvenu* mistress around her artful little fingers.

Miss Damer paid generous wages, and gave occasionally handsome presents; but she looked sharply after her own affairs, and never by any chance left her jewels loose, or her purse open to thiefish fingers. She dressed magnificently, that is to say, she wore clothing of the utmost costliness and beauty. The taste and harmonizing tints she did not always leave to Amalie, and therefore occasionally she excited the secret sneer of less wealthy and more refined people. But she enjoyed it thoroughly. And in her native place a sensation was made, be sure, by the rumours that came back concerning "Araminta Damer's real silk velvets, and diamonds."

Araminta herself enjoyed them. Her passion for jewellery bordered upon mania, and the great town jeweller benefited by it, so there was no one to remonstrate that her cousin continually added to their glittering stores. She made a great display of affection, and airs, and magnificence wherever she went. But that was the worst to be said of her.

For Joe, on the contrary, every folly and dissipation opened its devouring arms. He ran into the excess of prodigality. He surrounded himself with fast young men, who taught him every day some new extravagance or wickedness. He had fast horses and elegant carriages, he gave magnificent suppers, ran after every new star in the theatrical world, surrendered himself completely to a crazy excitement which was not happiness, and was making a wreck of his constitution at almost as prodigal a rate as he was spending money. For he had not his sister's sharpness, and could not discover how his evil companions were swindling him in all directions.

He knew, however, that he was not so happy as he expected to be. When he woke in the morning his head ached, and he was tired and listless. Dull as he was, he had a vague suspicion that those flattering friends were making game of him. He caught a pretty ballet-girl making grimaces behind her fan, while he was clasping his present, a costly bracelet, upon her arm. He overheard one of his constant associates, who shared his dinners, used his horses, his opera-box freely, calling him a stupid greenhorn. And though the fellow declared it was a mistake, and proved, as he insisted, that it was an entirely different person, and he accepted his apology, Joe had a latent suspicion that his ears had the best of the story, and gave him the truth. Under these impressions he would be sulky and bearish, shut himself up with costly viands, and the never-failing liquors, to the terror of his servants. When the orgie was over he was just in the state to be taken up again by the cajoling friends, and would go with new zest into worse extravagances than before. He soon obtained an unenviable notoriety. Sharers of every sort poured in upon him. Enormous as was the income, it was none too much to meet his lavish expenditure.

As Miss Plaindealer declared at the Dorcas meeting:

"Talk about spirits being able to come and go among us! Turning tables, and such actions! Do you think the Widder Damer could see the way that Joe is throwing money away, like so much dirt, and not rush out of her grave and snatch it up?"

This was Joe's life, and, as I have hinted, he half realised that it was not the unalloyed bliss he had expected. In his sober moments he looked at the fact, and declared it was only because he had not found Tib Harwood. One revenge ungratified was enough to poison his content. He had put a detective at work to hunt her up. He did not really suppose the claim would stand, now that his mother's death had broken the indenture; but he wanted to find her, and frighten her, perhaps coax her into

sharing some of his luxuries, and yielding him the favour she had so persistently refused in the old days.

The brother and sister saw little of each other. They had always quarrelled in old times, and they were no more congenial companions now. Araminta took care to have her business affairs kept entirely out of his management, and she would lend no countenance to his wild ways, especially after he became the public patron of a pugilist whose disgusting encounters filled the sporting papers of the day with his own and his patron's name.

Araminta had her ambitions and her day-dreams. And it was here, if anywhere, that Mademoiselle Amalie obtained the best of her. Miss Damer exclaimed with tragic emphasis one day, as she was viewing herself before a full-length mirror:

"Ah, this charming toilette is thrown away here! Wait till I reach Paris!"

"Paris!" echoed Amalia, with a little shrift of delight. "Does Mademoiselle Damer intend to visit Paris?"

Araminta arranged the diamond drop of her necklace, and tossed her head loftily.

"Of course I shall! Do you think I could be contented here? I shall go where I can find noble society. Do the titled gentlemen ever marry foreign wives?" she asked in conclusion, with an eagerness which the artful Amalia was well able to interpret.

"Certainly, if they have wealth and beauty," replied mademoiselle, promptly. "I have known many instances."

Araminta smiled triumphantly.

"We shall not lack either," murmured she, "and there shall be no further delay."

"And will my lady take me with her to Paris?" questioned Amalie, in her most deferential tone.

"You I understand French and know Paris: of course I shall take you. That is what troubles me most. I can never learn the strange words of your language. But do not the lords, and counts, and such noble gentlemen, speak English well, so I could talk with them?"

"Certain, oh, certain, my lady," replied Amalia, who was in a quiver of delight at the prospect of a return to dear, delightful Paris; and then she added artfully, "my lady will be sure to come back a countess, at the least."

Araminta already felt like one. She went swooping to and fro before the mirror, admiring the long train of the green satin dress, and the flashing rainbow that played across the diamond ornaments. From that moment the subtle Frenchwoman had her cue. She called her mistress "my lady" always, and never failed to understand the pleased smile with which Araminta responded.

"Yes, we will go to Paris. I have been waiting for another month's payment," Miss Damer conceded to explain. "I will have money enough at my command to appear in Paris like the best of them. I will dazzle even amidst their brilliant scenes. Amalie, you shall tell me what is right for me to do, and how I should appear; because you are familiar, of course, with the ways of your own country. And when we are there, if you behave to please me, I will raise your wages, and I will get another maid, and you shall be a companion. And then a *chaperone*, —that I must find after I get there. Money can do everything, and money I have."

Mademoiselle Amalie put on a look of deferential respect.

"My lady might make a *chaperone* of me, a companion and a *chaperone* both. Then I could always accompany you into society, and could whisper what the great gentlemen say when they talk to you, for, without doubt it will be hard to understand at first."

"Yes," returned Araminta, slowly, with a tinge of sharpness in her tone: "but I should want to be sure you would not presume too much."

"Oh, no, certainly not, my lady."

"Well, then, it is settled. I am going to make all the arrangements at once."

If Araminta's pale eyes could have flashed joyously, they would have done so when the preparations were complete, and she and her maid were transferred from the luxurious carriage to the steamer, which was also palpitating and quivering as if with eager longing to escape the moorings that held it to the shore: for at last her most fairy-like dream was on the point of realisation. She was starting, actually starting for Paris.

Amalia's black eyes did sparkle, not alone with triumph and joyful anticipation, but with mischief also, when, after they were fairly under way, she left her mistress in the state-room, and went out on deck. A gentleman, closely wrapped in a very fanciful Spanish cloak, stepped out to meet her.

"It is all right, is it, mademoiselle?"

"All right, sir. I was afraid you hadn't come," she whispered back.

And both looked round suspiciously, as if the words they had spoken held some black treason, or as if their speaking at all was a matter to be concealed.

And then the gentleman put something very like a purse of gold into the Frenchwoman's hand, and she counted, and darted back, and was presently very assiduously waiting upon her mistress, whose chief anxiety related to the box which held the costly collection of her jewels.

Amalia had placed her seat somewhat at a distance from the principal group, rather to her mistress' annoyance, for Miss Damer was always ready to exhibit for her fellow mortals' admiration her latest purchase of jewellery or other finery. The Frenchwoman, however, planted herself by her mistress' side, and began talking volubly, interspersing her words with numberless French phrases, which Miss Araminta could not understand, of course. But she liked to appear as if she did, and she fancied it gave her an air of importance in the eyes of the people who heard it. So she permitted mademoiselle to ramble on while she draped a costly Cashmere about her shoulders,—a garment more adapted as a wrap for a ball-room or the opera, than the damp evening air of a steamer, and settled into what she fondly believed to be an attitude of unstudied grace.

She was aware at once of the Frenchwoman's violent start and low exclamation,

"Mon Dieu, it is he! it can be no other."

A tall gentleman, wrapped in approved hero fashion, in the graceful folds of a dark Spanish cloak, was leisurely crossing the deck. He turned his face towards them as if attracted that way by their appearance, or possibly by Amalie's talk. Araminta saw what she at once pronounced an extremely aristocratic personage. It is possible that the flash of a large gem in the ring on his hand helped to this conclusion, but the man's appearance pleased her before her maid spoke.

"It is he?" repeated she, in a whisper, "and who is he, Amalie?"

"Indeed, my lady, I hardly dare mention his name. The very waves might take it and whisper it to his enemies. But I cannot be mistaken, no, it is impossible that I can be mistaken," repeated the maid, in a perturbed, mysterious tone.

"Will you tell me who you think it is?" demanded Araminta, impatiently.

"Ah, but you must not betray him if he is going back in disguise. It is the Count Montmorency, the Count Felix, I am sure. His father's palace was in sight of our cottage. My father was the gardener there."

"A count—a real, live count!" ejaculated Miss Araminta, in a tone of ecstasy.

"Hush, I implore you! Oh, do not let him hear—do not betray him to these people here. He is going back to France in disguise, most surely, for I heard—ah, my sister wrote me how sad it was that the noble family had fallen under the ban of the emperor's displeasure, and had all been exiled from *la belle France*. Mon Dieu! the cruelty of destiny! But it is he. I should know him anywhere—so handsome, so noble, the young Count Felix. Ah, ciel! if I dared to speak to him!"

"You must—you shall, Amalie," returned Miss Araminta, vehemently.

The Frenchwoman made a warning gesture. The gentleman passed beyond them, and leaning over the rail looked down into the gliding water.

"How graceful! how noble looking!" sighed Araminta Damer.

"I will learn what name he bears. See that ring on his hand. If it is the Montmorency signet there will be a stag's head and a wand for the crest," whispered the volatile maid. "Ah me, he is said. He is thinking of those fair domains that are his rightful patrimony. He is musing of France—*la belle France*. Poor Count Felix! would that I dared to say a word of comfort. He that was once so flattered, and courted, and admired, the envied gallant of the courtly train. Ah, my lady, if he speaks to you, be kind and gracious to him!"

Araminta was quite decided that she would be. She watched the interesting stranger, who stood, still wrapped in the folds of the cloak, with his arms folded, and his head drooping, like a motionless statue, beyond her, with ever increasing interest, and a strong desire for acquaintance.

Amalie began her French chattering again, and presently the gentleman started, looked toward them, took a step forward, then halted, hesitatingly.

Miss Araminta, in a flutter of expectation and agitation, half rose from her seat, and dropped her lace handkerchief. The disguised count darted forward, seized it, and presented it with the most graceful bow for accompaniment.

"Thanks, thanks," faltered Araminta.

"Ah, mademoiselle, it is a favour to myself. You were talking—I am sure I heard, as only a native

can speak it—my native language. Ah, Mademoiselle, it was like the music of a fountain to the ears of a wretched perishing of thirst. It stirred all my heart."

"It was Amalie, my maid," returned Miss Damer, graciously; "if you wish, she shall talk as long as you please."

"Amalie?" said he, doubtfully.

Amalie dropped the most humble courtesy, and bent her head as reverently as if she were in the presence of a queen.

"She is a French girl, you know," exclaimed Miss Araminta. "She thought you reminded her of some one she had known."

He clasped his hands imploringly.

"No, no, it cannot be. She must not recognise me; it will be ruin for me, just when I am hoping for brilliant success."

"My dear sir, she is friendly, and so am I. We will do anything to help you," said Araminta, eagerly.

"I do not comprehend, except that you are angelic in your kindness."

"I am Amalie, the gardener Armand's daughter, Count Felix," said the maid.

He gave a great sigh, half, it seemed, of trouble, half of relief.

"What, Amalie who used to bring my sister flowers? Then I am sure my secret is in good hands, and faithful keeping. I need not tremble lest it be discovered when we land in France. Your family were our sworn vassals as well as faithful friends, generations back, my child. Well, well, it is pleasant to meet anyone who has known the poor exile in his true state."

"I am ready to serve you in any way," said Amalie, "and so is my mistress. She has a generous heart. This is my mistress, Miss Araminta Damer, Count Felix."

The count took off his hat a second time.

"I am truly honoured by the introduction. Yes, I can read the generous nature of her noble heart. I can read it plainly upon her angelic face."

He had his hand on his heart when he concluded. Miss Araminta thought him too delightful. She drooped her head in sweet confusion.

"But Mademoiselle Damer will condescend to know me only as a poor music teacher. I am Monsieur Cardeau on board the steamer and after I reach Paris, but after that, if the political movement now awaiting my arrival succeeds, as it will and must, then I shall be proud to take you both to my ancestral halls, and welcome you in the name of my noble race."

"How grand, how noble!" Araminta could scarcely restrain her delight.

"We are going to Paris ourselves," she explained, "and if anything we can do will help you, I shall be only too ready."

"You are an angel of goodness as well as of beauty," replied the enthusiastic count.

Miss Araminta did not see, whether the count did or not, how Mademoiselle Amalie shrugged those sloping shoulders of hers over this speech and bit her lip. However, at this point the discreet waiting-maid retired to another part of the deck, and the count and Araminta held a long and romantic and evidently mutually entertaining conversation. He described the beauties of his ancestral hall, the vicissitudes of his romantic life; and she hinted concerning the golden treasures which were flowing into her hands from the iron mines on her estate.

They parted like old friends, and Miss Araminta was filled with very wonderful dreams of a handsome count with a diadem in his hand, kneeling at her feet imploring a word of grace.

Mademoiselle, the French maid, had her dreams also.

(To be continued.)

In the year 1803 A. von Humboldt was fortunate enough to witness an eruption of Cotopaxi, a well-known peak, in the northern Andes; during which, among other products, a large quantity of fish was ejected. The inquiries immediately instituted, and the investigations of more recent travellers, have brought to light the astounding fact that from time to time, though at irregular periods, fishes are cast up from the interior of the mountain during volcanic eruptions. This phenomenon is not confined to Cotopaxi; it has been observed also in other centres of volcanic action—viz., Tungurahua, Sungay, Imbabura, Cargueirago, &c., all of them in the same range. From the craters of these volcanoes, or from fissures in their sides, it is an ascertained fact that fish are vomited forth at a height of some 16,000ft. above the level of the sea, and about half that height above the surrounding plains. The animals all belong to a single species, the *Arges Cyclopus*, as it has been well named. Nor is it a mere chance fish

er two that finds its way to the outer world through this strange opening. They are ejected in such countless shoals that, on more than one occasion, the fetid exhalations proceeding from their putrid bodies have spread disease and death over the neighbouring regions. As far as the external world is concerned, *Arges Cyclopum* is known to exist in some lakes on the sides of these mountains 8,000ft. to 10,000ft. above sea-level. It is presumable that these lakes communicate with reservoirs in the interior, where the Pregadillas are generated, and thus find their way through the crater. But this is mere conjecture. If the internal lakes do not exist, whence come the myriads of fish which are ever and anon ejected? Not the least curious part of the affair is, that though some of the fish reach *terra firma* in a half-boiled condition, most of them are perfectly raw, and not a few are even alive, in spite of the fiery ordeal through which they have had to pass.

SCIENCE.

WAREHOUSING PETROLEUM.—At Antwerp, some interesting experiments are being made, for the purpose of testing a suggestion of the possibility of escaping the danger of a conflagration from the ignition of petroleum, by warehousing it under water.

TO RENDER TIMBER INCOMBUSTIBLE.—Herr Reinsch concludes, as the result of his experiments as to the best means of preventing timber bursting into flame, that impregnating timber with a concentrated solution of rock-salt is as good, if not better, preservative against it bursting into flame as water-glass (silicate of soda), while the price of the former salt is, of course only a mere trifle; moreover, rock-salt thus applied to timber is a preservative against dry rot and noxious insects. He recommends the use of salt water, that is to say, a solution of rock-salt of moderate strength, for the use of fire-engines during a fire, as by far more effective than water; but in order that the salt should not injure the working parts of the engines, they will immediately afterwards have to be played with fresh water.

ON ZINC.—Zinc is a metal of the present century. Seventy years ago there were not so many pounds of it required for the wants of the whole world as there are tons manufactured at the present time. Its production has increased two thousand-fold, and we must look upon it as one of the most useful of all the metals in the whole round of chemistry. It is true that the ancients made brass from copper and calamine; but they were not aware of the existence of metallic zinc in the mineral they employed to combine with the copper. The word zinc itself does not appear to have been used before the year 1540, and by some authorities it is traced to Zincker or Zacken, meaning the chimney stack in which the oxide collected when zinc-bearing ores were roasted. When this fine-dust became known as a metal it received opprobrious names, such as "the spurious son of copper," and hence a bastard metal. Some called it congealed mercury, and the miners thought it was unripe lead ore, and if it were left a few ages longer it would mature to something useful. It appears to have been brought to England from India towards the end of the sixteenth century, and to have received at that time the name of "spelter," which it still bears.

CARBON.—It certainly appears incredible that the diamond, so transcendently beautiful, sparkling with more brilliancy than the dew-drop at sunrise, should be nothing else than a bit of charcoal; but so it is. Not here, however, does the chameleon power of carbon rest, for by another change it becomes invisible! In such a state it exists in the brightest and purest atmosphere in the world. By another change it becomes the thick, heavy flakes of smoke which we see roll out of ill-constructed flues—the "blacks" of London and Birmingham. Coal is but impure carbon; hence it is often spoken of as the "black diamond," signifying, however, as much the intrinsic value of coal to man as its chemical relationship to the sparkling gem. How the world would fare without carbon it would be difficult to say; for it forms the major part of the vegetable and animal creation.

TWO CURIOUS NEEDLES.—The King of Prussia recently visited a needle manufactory in his kingdom, in order to see what machinery, combined with the human hand, could produce. He was shown a number of superfine needles, thousands of which together did not weigh half-an-ounce, and marvelled how such minute articles could be pierced with an eye. But he was to see that in this respect even something still finer and more perfect could be created. The bore—that is the workman whose business it is to bore the eyes in these needles—asked for a hair from the monarch's head. It was readily given and with a smile. He placed it at once under the boring machine, made a hole in it with

the greatest care, furnished it with a thread, and then handed the singular needle to the astonished king. The second curious needle is in the possession of Queen Victoria. It was made at the celebrated needle manufactory at Redditch, and represents the column of Trajan in miniature. This well-known Roman column is adorned with numerous scenes in sculpture, which immortalize Trajan's heroic actions in war. On this diminutive needle, scenes in the life of Queen Victoria are represented in relief, but so finely cut and so small that it requires a magnifying glass to see them. The Victoria needle, moreover, can be opened; it contains a number of needles of smaller size, which are equally adorned with scenes in relief.

RAPIDITY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC ACTION.—It is estimated that 1-27,000th of a second is sufficient to fix the solar image, yet this is a long time in comparison with that in which photographs are taken by the electric light. The experiments of Sir Charles Wheatstone, have shown that the duration of the illuminating spark does not exceed 1,000,000th of a second, yet a clear and distinct photographic image is obtained by a single electric discharge. By this means may be shown the real form of objects to which a deceptive appearance is given by their rapid movement. If a wheel on whose side any figure is drawn in conspicuous lines be made to rotate with the greatest possible velocity, the figure will present to the eye only a series of concentric bands of different shades. Let it now be photographed while in motion by the electric flash, and the wheel will appear stationary, with the figure perfectly well defined.

LAUNCH OF THE ABYSSINIA.—This fine specimen of naval architecture—a floating ram designed for the protection of the harbour of Bombay—has just been launched from the works of Messrs. Dudgeon, of Millwall, in the presence of Sir Bartle Frere, C.B., late governor of Bombay (whose daughter performed the ceremony of christening), General Talbot, Mr. James Lake, chief inspector of the Admiralty, and a numerous and distinguished company. The length of the ram between perpendiculars is 225ft.; beam over all, 42ft.; depth of hold, 12ft. 3in.; and her burthen is 1,854 tons. Her engines are of 200-horse power nominal, and 1,200 indicated; her draught, when complete, will be 15ft., and her estimated speed in eight knots per hour. She is constructed on the turret principle of Captain Coles, and has two turrets working two guns of 18 tons in each turret. She is armour-plated four feet below the water line, the plates being from 7in. to 10in. in thickness, with a backing of teak of from 9in. to 11in. Her complement of officers and men is calculated at 100. The launch passed off most satisfactorily, and Sir Bartle Frere, in the course of a few observations addressed to the assembled company, alluded to the fact that this was the first vessel constructed with the view of carrying out Earl Granville's idea that the colonies should provide vessels for the protection of their own harbours and coasts.

PREVENTION OF RUST.—Captain Ross, of the Artillery, has recently taken out a patent for a composition which, applied to the clean surface of iron or other metals, chemically combines with it to form, in the case of iron, a coating of iron itself, but changed in character, and said not to rust or oxydize, even if steeped in water for a week. This discovery has been officially submitted by the inventor to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, and the Deputy Adjutant-General Royal Artillery himself experimented on some delicate steel articles, which had been treated with the composition, by putting them in the rain and keeping them out on the wet grass all night, which ordeal they sustained without a speck of rust. The composition is so delicate that it can be applied even to the finest needles and small clock-work wheels. We are informed that watch-springs are not affected by it, and will never rust after its application; nor does it alter, but, if anything, improves the temper of knife or sword-blades. It turns the surface of steel implements to a whitish-grey colour, and is capable, perhaps, of receiving as high a polish as steel itself.

PATENT CAB TELEGRAPH.—Any improvement that will tend to lessen the discomfort of those who, either from choice or necessity, use London cabs will be hailed with satisfaction. Hitherto the passenger must, in all weathers, stretch out his neck, after the fashion of the giraffe or ostrich, to direct the driver as to the course he should take, or to stop his career. There is not only inconvenience, but positive danger resulting from such a necessity. This is obviated by a recent invention patented by Messrs. T. E. Lundy & Co., of which the following is a brief description. A small lever is placed inside the vehicle, moving over a brass plate, with the words "Left—Right—Stop," engraved on it. When the passenger moves the lever to any one of these positions, a corresponding movement is made on the

outside on a neatly-arranged pointer which traverses over a ratchet work, thus making a noise sufficient to attract the attention of the driver. The affair is so simple that even a child can use it. The patentees have already fitted it up in several private carriages, the occupants of which testify to the advantages the invention confers.

ABOLITION OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

THE celebrated Mr. Sampson Brass, upon pretending to discover the iniquity of a servant, exclaimed, with an excess of scepticism, "And this is the world that turns upon its own axis, and has lunar infinities, and revolutions round heavenly bodies, and various games of that sort!" But here comes a certain Dr. P. E. Trastour de Varano, who has published, or is about to publish, a work in which he has or will "play at bowls with the sun and moon," demolish the Copernican system, repeat the Laws of Kepler, and prove the pipkin of Sir Isaac Newton to have been as false as Dead Sea fruit or the apple of Eve. We mourn the pipkin, because that pretty story of Sir Isaac knocked on the head by it was one of the solaces of our infancy; but inasmuch as Dr. de Varano proposes to confute all astronomical learning, and even announces that the sun at some future day "will rise in the west and set in the east," it is hardly worth while to be too sorry over any particular part of human learning. For the doctor brings the whole heavens and the whole earth to a right-about face; informs us that "the stars have a general movement that carries them from west to east," and that before long "Easter will come in the middle of spring," to which, theologically, we have no objection, so it does not cease to come at all. Now it is that we begin to thank our fortune that we are not scientific; that we have not spent the days of our life in figuring and our nights in looking through telescopes. Still, to think that "the sun is not placed in the centre of the planetary universe!" To think that we do not annually revolve around that luminary! That we have been under a delusion respecting our own "orbit," which is not a "circle." We are bewildered!

We have very little heavenly learning, and truly confess that we are not in a position to refute the teachings of Dr. de Varano. Indeed, we rather admire and enjoy them. This being an era of change, why should we not change all that? We have always thought the conduct of the sun to be extremely whimsical and reprehensible. We have always felt that if he was "the centre of the system"—the head centre, if we may be allowed the expression—that there were times and seasons when he deserved to be impeached and removed from office. When he was wanted for turnips he came out for grass, and when he was wanted for fruit he veiled his shining head in a cloud. There are thousands of our readers who have felt that "weather" (so called) was a snare and a delusion; that the (so called) "succession of the seasons" was a dreadful mistake; and this opinion they have mostly entertained when shivering through June or perspiring through December. They will appreciate the discovery of our learned doctor, that "climate is subject to extreme vicissitudes," and confoundedly disagreeable vicissitudes some of them are! It is a sort of comfort to know that hereafter "we need not expect any specific weather;" and this will be a special satisfaction to those learned persons who prophecy concerning the same, inasmuch as they can now give the reins to their imagination, and prophecy whatever they please.

But, after all, we are thinking of that particular morning when the sun, having completed his arrangements for doing so, will astonish mankind by coming up where he went down the previous evening, and will rise in the west! We shall not be here to see it, nor will Dr. Varano; but we can imagine the frightened population of the world running about in consternation, and whispering with pale lips, "The Doctor was right!" For a time on earth and in heaven the confusion will be extreme. Persons having letters to write will know not how to date them, and persons having notes to pay, in the general transmogrification of everything, will suffer them to go to protest. Cocks will fall dead with wonder from their perches, and cooks will be in a quandary between supper and breakfast; the polite will vary between "Good morning!" and "Good evening!" and those who are of regular habits, and have taken their shower-baths at sunrise for years, will glance dubiously at the accustomed string and shiver woefully on the brink.

THE FARADAY MEMORIAL.—A sum of about 1,400*s*. has been subscribed, chiefly among men of science, towards the memorial to the late Professor Faraday. It is expected it will take the shape of a statue or monument.

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[COLONEL BRAND'S TALISMAN.]

FAITHFUL MARGARET.

CHAPTER XIV.

In these strange, dread events, Just Heaven instructs us with an awful voice, That conscience rules us even against our choice, Our inward monitor to guide or warn, If listened to; but, if repelled with scorn, At length, as dire remorse, she reappears, Works on our guilty hopes and selfish fears! Still bids, Remember! and still cries, Too late! And while she scares us, goads us to our fate!

Monologue.

"My proofs are these," answered Margaret, forcing herself to speak quietly. "He acts exactly as a man would act who was personating some one else. He knows the true St. Udo's history to a certain extent, and cleverly acts upon it; but go beyond the part he has rehearsed, and he betrays the most extraordinary confusion. When first I saw him I was astonished at the change which the few months had made. The longer I studied him the more palpable became his disguise to my eyes; and I am now morally convinced that my suspicions are well founded."

"All this is nothing," said Mr. Davenport. "You have advanced no proofs, except to show that from the first day of his return you conceived a dislike to him."

"I made him commit himself wholly to-day," continued Margaret, anxiously. "The first time he betrayed his ignorance of the contents of that letter which St. Udo Brand wrote me upon leaving the castle; the second time he was so puzzled by the fastening of the library glass door that he could not open it. That door, Mr. Davenport, which Mrs. Brand's grandson used exclusively!"

"And would you condemn a man upon such accidents of memory as these?"

"Had St. Udo Brand that cowardly glance—that crime-darkened visage—that crawling, scheming softness?" cried Margaret, with flashing eyes. "Ugh! he is a serpent drawing his slimy folds into our midst—he is a travesty on the dead hero of the Lombard battle-field!"

"You did not always think so well of Captain Brand," retorted the lawyer, with another exchange of glances with Gay; "and I should think that seeing him once—and that under circumstances rather damaging to him—you would hardly be capable of judging of his heroism or other good qualities, in comparison with anyone."

"I am not deceived," said Margaret; "and, if you

will watch this man, you cannot be deceived either."

The executors remained eyeing each other with a dubious frown.

This charge was leaving a very disagreeable impression on their minds. The physician remarked the gleaming eyes beside him with a speculation as to the sanity of his ward.

The lawyer ruminated over her communication with a speculation as to her honesty.

"Be careful, Miss Walsingham, not to get yourself into trouble," said Mr. Davenport. "It might prove very damaging to your character to defame the man who was to have shared with you Mrs. Brand's estates."

"Would it not be more damaging to my character and to yours, Mr. Davenport, as retainer of the Brand estates, to allow an impostor a foothold at Seven Oak Waste?"

"Fair and softly, madam. He can't have a foothold unless you are pleased to accept him as your husband. Why attempt any exposure at all? Why not suffer his attentions until he proposes, and then dismiss him as if you were dismissing the veritable St. Udo? Be he who he may, he can't gain a foothold after that."

Margaret's face waxed paler.

Gazing in turn at each of the executors, she might expect little sympathy from the half cajoling regards of the one, or from the impulsive scowl of the other. "If he is an adventurer, come here with the carefully-prepared plot by which he hopes to win the Brand estates," she said, slowly, "he will not be likely to stop at his efforts because a woman stands in the way. He will have worked too hard and risked too much to be lightly turned from his purpose. He will have weighed well the chances of a refusal. The woman who stands in his way will be removed if she refuses to be his stepping-stone!"

"A parcel of moonshine!" cried Davenport, hotly.

"I implore you to believe otherwise. Do you believe I would have come to you on mere suspicion? I am perfectly convinced in my own mind, sir."

"But you must convince others as well as yourself. You must bring proofs. Why, we can think nothing, but that that ancient pique of yours against the captain has touched your brain, and made you really take up this unworthy suspicion against man who is the same as ever he was. I see no difference in him, except that he looks the worse for wear."

"Which his hard usage makes very natural," said Dr. Gay.

"You refuse to help me, then?"

"What would you like us to do, Miss Margaret?"

"I would like you to force this man into proving his identity: confront him with such circumstances as must unmask his plot if he has one; you have the power, and I have not."

"I don't see that we are authorised to molest any man upon such crazy suppositions as those you have advanced; indeed, I can't consent to take one step of an unfriendly nature against the colonel; I have been a faithful solicitor for the Brands these many years, and it is late in the day to turn against them now. Give it up, Miss Walsingham."

"I shall not give it up!" retorted Margaret, rising; "if I must work single-handed, I will, but remember, you have left me to battle with a dangerous and desperate foe."

She left the office without another word, and slowly retraced her steps towards Seven Oak Waste.

She was imbued with as profound a sense of her own defenceless condition as any woman under the sun.

She invoked the help of her only protectors, and they had indignantly refused to be alarmed; if she would unmask a bold and determined villain, she must do it alone.

"I am going to have a hard struggle," she thought, "and it may be a struggle for my life."

No wonder that she stood still in her walk, to turn this thought about in her mind with a horrible earnestness; it took its weird and awful shape from a passing memory of those murderously treacherous eyes which had surely taken her in more than once in the library that morning; it loomed larger and larger as she pondered, and the chill shadow of death seemed to be over her.

"For my life," she repeated, gazing with dilated eyes into the warning future.

Castle Brand appeared cold and gray before her from among its bare-armed oaks; the brown Waste stretched far and wide, and a black pool lay in a gloomy hollow, deep and inky, as if its stormy face kept impassively calm over secrets of murder and violence.

For a time the natural instinct of self-preservation was strong in the heart of the lonely girl; she quailed before the dangers of her course, and almost persuaded herself to turn and fly; but her inborn courage came to her aid; a something in the soul of this naturally weak woman rose in fierce protest against allowing an impostor to triumph; her fears faded away out of sight, as implacable anger succeeded the brief emotion.

"Let him wear the dead St. Udo's honours!" she

ejaculated; "let him be Ethel Brand's heir? No,—not while I, the sworn keeper of the wishes of her who was to me a benefactress, can raise a hand to baulk him. He shall find Margaret Walsingham no coward."

The rattle of a chaise aroused her, and she looked round to behold Dr. Gay approaching.

"What are you standing there for, rooted to the spot?" he asked, drawing up beside her. "Are you surveying, or inveighing?"

"The latter term is the most appropriate. I was mentally measuring my courage with that of the subject of our afternoon's consultation."

"Step up beside me. I would like a few words with you. You left us in such a hurry that I felt it necessary to follow you."

She obeyed him and they leisurely approached the gates.

"Davenport and I have been thinking that it is our duty to warn you how you give wind to this extraordinary suspicion of yours; it may prove embarrassing, perhaps dangerous for you, and would create a great deal of needless scandal."

"You wish me to be utterly silent on the subject?"

"Well, yes, my dear, it is by far the safest plan."

She pondered deeply for a few minutes.

"I promise to keep my convictions to myself, until I have found such proofs against him as will satisfy you and Mr. Davenport."

"Has Colonel Brand left the castle?" asked the doctor, as the lodgekeeper opened the gates.

"No, sir, there he is," pointing under the trees, "him and his dog. It seemed tearing up from the village like a mad thing, an hour ago, and yelped until its master came to it."

There under the trees, kicking up the withered leaves in little clouds, paced the colonel, with head dropped on his breast and folded arms; so deep in reverie that he seemed unconscious of all outside of his own brain.

Round and round he walked in an idle circle upon the leaf-strewn park under the trees, and the dog after him with dropped nose and stealthy tread, as if he too were tracking game; and a malicious fancy might have suggested that the man was followed by a canine shadow of himself.

"There he lurks," spoke Margaret, with loathing scorn, as they left the lodge behind; "a patient, lean sleuth-hound upon the scent and watching for the moment to spring. Is that the gay and reckless St. Udo Brand? the brave soldier and the ido of women? the man who scorned a presumed fortune-hunter, and left all for love? Does the blood of good Ethel Brand flow in the veins of such a schemer? He would lick the dust off my feet for money! he whom you insult the memory of the Brands by believing in!"

"Assuredly the girl is touched," thought Gay.

They almost drove upon the colonel before he was aware of them, and so noiseless had been their approach that he appeared utterly bewildered with consternation when Gay addressed him.

"A bleak day, colonel."

"Yes, a bleak day; a very bleak day," said the wily voice, while the twitching face slowly got into company order.

"Having a walk among the oaks, sir? Rather desolate looking at this time of year."

"Particularly desolate up at the castle, doctor; I was glad to turn out and bear Argus company. Is Miss Walsingham sufficiently wrapped for this cold wind?"

"Oh, I hope so," answered Gay, looking in vain for a reply in Margaret's stern face. "She has been taking a little drive with me; I picked her up on the road there."

"A little drive?" repeated Colonel Brand, with a slightly sarcastic emphasis, "preceded by a little walk. Did you find our friend Davenport at his post, my dear lady?"

Margaret started, and turned her flashing eyes upon the smiling interrogator.

"By what unworthy means have you ascertained my movements?" she demanded.

"Why, dear Miss Walsingham, your housekeeper informed me, when I asked her the cause of your abrupt departure from me, that you had gone to see Mr. Davenport!"

The girl sat staring at him in dumb indignation. She had communicated her design to no one in the house, and the colonel was telling her a falsehood to her very face. It was perfectly patent to her that he had dogged her footsteps.

"Are you coming up to Castle Brand?" asked Gay, nervously staving off an expected explosion.

"I—think not," answered the colonel, with a baleful glance; "Miss Walsingham evidently is indifferent to my society. Why, do you know, doctor, I came here to-day expecting a delightful afternoon with her in the library where first we met, and like the lonely Marguerite of wicked Faust, she melted

from my view, and I found but Mephistopheles taunting me at my elbow in the shape of old memories of years which might have been better spent—called up by the associations of the room."

"She's shy yet—she's shy," said the doctor in an apologetic tone. "Aren't you, dear?"

It was utterly out of Margaret's power to do anything but look at St. Udo Brand, as represented by the man among the withered leaves, with a cold stare of scorn.

"The bleak wind is injuring Miss Walsingham's complexion," said the sneering voice again. "I will release her from the freezing process, and myself from Paradise. Good evening."

Dr. Gay drove his impulsive ward up to the steps of Castle Brand, and set her down between the griffins couchant, and she stood forlornly there clinging to his hand.

"I am afraid to stay here alone," she whispered; "do come and stay with me, dear doctor, until that terrible man is taken away."

"I'm afraid Mrs. Gay might object to such an arrangement, my dear; she is a person who—who generally objects—who is opposed to leaving her own home under any circumstances."

"I did not think of Mrs. Gay. Well, will you please ask Mr. Davenport to come? Will you implore him to come? He has nothing to keep him, and I am so defenseless here."

"I will mention your request, but I think he will say what I feel without saying—it is a pity you left my house the way you did."

With that parting shot the little doctor made his adieu, stepped into his chaise, and cheerfully drove away.

Oh, this terrible Waste! Listen how the harsh wind moans over it, and rises into savage shrieks!

The old trees croak and sigh like the surge of an angry sea; the ancient windows rattle in their stone sockets; the ghostly Brands all down the gallery seem to shudder in their massive frames, as if an ominous Present were casting its shadows back to their centuried Past; the face of Ethel, the beautiful, looks down upon the companion she once loved and cherished, as if she would say in the limitless pride of her heart:

"I trust to you, Margaret Walsingham; keep my name pure, or let it die!"

The candles flicker and wave in phantom gusts of wind; long shadows flit about with wide-spreading wings; the brain of the lonely girl is peopled with visions of horror.

Let her double-lock her chamber door, or pace in restlessness the echoing halls, Ethel Brand's bequest has come like a curse to poor Margaret!

A note arrived at the castle next morning from Dr. Gay, which stirred her up to feverish excitement and showed her speedy crisis was at hand.

"MY DEAR WARD,—I write more for the purpose of giving you time to prepare your answer, and (may I presume it?) to give you a little timely advice as to the nature of your answer, than for the sake of the communication itself.

"Yesterday, upon leaving you, I had a very momentous interview with Colonel Brand (he returned to Regis with me), in which he threw himself in the most candid and open manner upon my friendship, and explained to me what he wished to be his future course.

"After commenting with a great deal of proper feeling upon his former extravagances of life, he said that it was little wonder that a highly-sensitive young lady like Miss Walsingham should feel a distrust of him, and that he was quite conscious of a revulsion of feeling on Miss Walsingham's part which his most heartfelt apologies for his former rudeness could not remove. He then implored me to put him upon a way to obliterate the bad impression he had created, so that he might win your affection.

"For," he declared, with tears in his eyes, "I have learned to love her to distraction; and if I am ever to be anything, her hand must beckon me on."

"His sinosity so invited my sympathy that I was within an ace of disclosing to him your ridiculous suspicions, but upon second thoughts concluded that it would wound him too much. However, I proposed to stand his friend with you, so henceforth look upon me in that light."

"He then informed me that he desired to win your consent to marry him purely from personal affection, and that if you will only be his wife, he should insist upon having the whole of the Brand estates settled upon you, in case anyone might accuse him of mercenary motives. And in short, he concluded by disclosing to me his determination to end his suspense by proposing to you this evening. I urged upon him that it would be too premature, but he answered with deep emotion:

"She hates me more and more every day—let me touch her noble heart by my great love, and she will pity, and in time endure me."

"I don't know whether the course he has marked out will have that effect or not, but this I hope—that you will not turn away your co-heir without due reason."

"And now for my bit of advice."

"Weigh well before this evening the possibility of your having been unjust in your suspicions of the man who is going to offer you his hand; if you do, conscientiously, you will come to the conclusion that you have been unjust."

"Then ask yourself if it will be right, or generous, or honourable, to dismiss St. Udo Brand from his rightful home and fortune, now that he is willing to bestow it upon you, and are only for your love."

"Hoping that the next occasion of our meeting will be more pleasing than the last, I remain your obedient servant,

R. GAY.

"P.S.—I mentioned last night to Davenport your desire to have him move into the castle for a while, and he utterly refuses to do anything so absurd and extraordinary."

R. G.

Thus plainly showing that they washed their hands of their ward's vagaries, the executors not only refused her her countenance, but seemed inclined to go over to the enemy.

With what indignant sneer Margaret read the account of his presumed love for herself!

"He has taken his measures," she mused, "to force me into showing my hand, before I have taken one move against him. He is too clever for me—what shall I do?"

Pondering hour after hour, at length she made up her little plan with doubt and misgiving.

"Colonel Brand is coming here this evening, Mrs. Chetwode," she said, as the dusk slowly deepened on stone parapet and spiked rail, "and I wish you to bear me company in the library. You know I do not like the colonel, so you must be my chaperone."

When the suitor came to his lady's bower, on a horse which smoked with hard and furious riding, and when he followed the servant to the library, he found the lady of his heart standing with a demeanour in every way proper for the occasion, while the old housekeeper, in her best black satin, sat behind the statue of St. George, sedately knitting.

"May I entreat the honour of a private interview?" asked the smooth voice.

"We can be as private here as you wish," was the polite reply, "my housekeeper cannot hear anything unless you specially address her."

The colonel bowed and professed himself satisfied, but if the angry glance which he cast among the murky shadows, where the bright needles clicked, meant anything, the colonel spoke falsely.

He took the chair assigned him, but evidently his proposed form of declaration was routed by this unexpected arrangement.

His fingers plucked at his dark moustache in a nervous and undecided manner, and he took a long time to deliberate before he could trust himself to launch upon the momentous subject. "I am aware," at length began the lover, in a constrained voice, "that Miss Walsingham has conceived very unfriendly feelings toward me—an enmity, I might almost call it—for has she not expressed as much? and I have come here this evening with the hope of making a successful effort to come to an amicable understanding with her, and it will be my last trial."

Always sinking his tones a little lower, and bending to his listener a little nearer, and casting watchful glances towards the corner where the bright needles clicked, the last word came to sound like a muttered threat, far more than the appeal of a lovesick admirer.

"It," continued he, "Miss Walsingham thinks better of these unfriendly feelings, and expresses herself willing to listen to reason, I will most gladly offer her my hand, if she will deign to accept it as the hand of her husband, and will do all in my power to make her not repeat her choice, and if she acts faithfully by me, I will act faithfully by her. Does she consider it possible to say 'yes' to this proposal?"

Coldly avoiding the chance of coming to that mutual understanding which his dropped tones and significant looks insisted upon, Margaret answered in measured accents thus decorously:

"I am not sufficiently acquainted with Colonel Brand to feel able to give him a decided answer with due appreciation of his virtues. If he will be kind enough to wait four weeks, by that time I shall have made up my mind."

The suitor tapped his heel with his cane and meditated. If his frowning brow and furious eyes did not belie him, this response was an unexpected one, and routed his previous plans.

"Have I checkedmate you?" thought Margaret; "you dread the delay of four weeks? Yes, you do; I see it in your wicked face, and I say to myself: 'Well done, Margaret!'"

"I have no motive beyond your own welfare," re-

turned the lover, "when I urge you to place the day of your answer a little nearer."

"Is that a threat? Shall I turn round and tell Mrs. Chetwode that Colonel Brand has threatened me because I cannot promise to accept him without deliberation?"

"You have misunderstood me, then I shall say to your housekeeper. I shall explain that your weak health reminded me of the danger of protracted anxiety, and that then I urged you for your own welfare to place the day of your answer a little nearer."

There was a pause, and the two antagonists eyed each other firmly.

"In spite of the danger to my welfare," said Margaret, with unmistakable emphasis, "I must insist on taking a month to consider your proposal. I shall take as much care as possible of my health meanwhile, so that you may have no reason to complain of my imprudence."

"You are determined, then?" said the colonel, rising, with cold fury in his eyes.

His repressive power was almost forsaking him, and it was with difficulty that he preserved that decorous gentleness of manner which he had assumed with such care.

"Yes, I am determined."

There she stood, waiting with a freezing smile for him to go; no gentleman could decently stay another moment under such circumstances.

A sudden impulse, quick as thought, moved Margaret to accompany him to the door; a certain expression on his face stirred up a Babel of memories; it was gone, and they were gone, but she would sound the same waters again.

"Keep the door shut, John, because of the draft," she said to the servant, passing out under the stars with her adorer.

"I shall feel obliged if you only communicate with me through Mr. Davenport," said she, touching the stone lintel with her hand, "until the next four weeks elapse. I shall specially invite you to the castle should I wish to see you at any time, and I expect you to obey the call."

The colonel bowed silently.

The wild, wan moon came out through a riven cloud and shone on Castle Brand. The man on the lowest step and the woman on the highest, gazed fixedly into each other's faces; his fierce, envious, and distrustful—hers watchful, cold, and unflinching.

Waiting breathlessly for that wave of memory to beat upon the sands again, it came with the grouping of certain incidents, and with the magic spell of association.

The time had come when the false seeming of this man should drop like a garment. The time had come when a light from the past should break upon Margaret with the suddenly shining moon. The time had come when their souls were revealed to each other and doomed to recognition despite the most perfect masking which rascality could assume to compass its end, or purity devise to hide from peril.

These two had stood thus before, the moon gleaming coldly on both—his horse pawing in the shadow—a dying woman in the Brand state chamber.

Margaret turned suddenly on her heel, and shut the door. She leaned against the staircase pillars and clasped her hands, under the eyes of the astonished John.

"I know him now," she muttered; "he was here the night of Mrs. Brand's death; his name was Roland Mortlake!"

CHAPTER XV.

Where are thy terrors, Conscience, where thy justice, That this bad man dare boldly act his crimes, Insult thy sacred power, and glory in it?" Francis.

MARGARET stole to her chamber and bolted the door, and leaned her dizzy head upon her hand.

Gradually the first surprise of her mind gave way before a dreadful despondency, and she revolved the revelation in ever-increasing alarm.

"He is cleverer than I am," she assured herself, "and he will most likely win the contest. He has come out of a past which I shall never be able to trace to personate St. Udo Brand, and his resemblance is the weakest instrument he uses. He has appeared like a horrible phantom in St. Udo's guise, and he defies me to tear his mask from him. He is no mere adventurer who has traded upon an accidental likeness to Colonel Brand and stepped into his shoes upon the day of his death—he probably was arranging his plot upon the night on which he came from Regis with Captain Brand's letter. He has waited St. Udo's death to step into his place and enact his life from the point where he laid it down on the battle-field. Has he anything to do with the sudden end of that life? Has he murdered St. Udo Brand? Great Heaven! am I to unveil an impostor and find an assassin in this man?"

She clenched her hands, and faithful memory

brought back the vision of the dying hero, upon his prostrate horse, and she heeded it now, though she had sternly repressed all belief of it before.

"Is Mortlake the crawling demon who crouched over the brave colonel in the dark and stabbed him? Have I met him first upon the steps of Castle Brand—secondly, in my vision of St. Udo's death, and last in my treacherous lover of to-night? Oh, my heart! is St. Udo dead, then, and by his hand? The grand lion-hearted hero, by the hand of a fawning slave?"

Wild with horror, she shuddered at the dark chasm she beheld yawning in her way, but not for a moment did she shrink from the tortuous path which led to that abyss—the path of inexorable pursuit, which should end not until the man was hunted down and unmasked.

She waited until she was calm, and then she wrote her letter to the two executors, which was to expose the man who stood in St. Udo's position, well knowing the dangers of the path she had chosen, and accepting her chances without fear:

"Castle Brand.

"DEAR SIRS.—This is the second appeal I make to you on behalf of the true disposition of Mrs. Brand's property. If this appeal is unheeded, I will take the case in my own hands, and pursue it to the end, whatever that end may be; and if I die before I succeed, Heaven will hold you responsible for my death.

"The man who calls himself Colonel St. Udo Brand came here to-night according to appointment, and took the first step against me, and for the possession of Seven Oak Waste, by proposing for my hand. Believing him to be an impostor, I declined giving him a decided answer, and bade him wait for one month. In other words (and he perfectly understood it), I demanded a month in which to discover the proofs of his villainy.

"He accepted my flat, but with great reluctance, because he felt his position so unsafe, before my marriage or death, that he feared thirty days' delay might ruin it.

"At the moment of our parting, a sudden rush of memory revealed to me the true personality of the poor Captain Brand.

"I beg of you to weigh this communication well, and not to put it down as you have put down my convictions before.

"On the night of Lady Brand's death, you remember that Captain Brand, in his fatal carelessness, came as far as Regis to see his grandmother, and stayed there, sending a note of excuses to me by a messenger. This messenger gave his name as Roland Mortlake, and stood waiting at the foot of the steps while I read the note.

"Mark me here! This man was so like the Brands, that Parcell, the steward, advanced to meet him, saying:

"Welcome to the Castle, captain."

"He explained that he was not the captain, but the captain's messenger, and he stood by all the time I was communicating the contents of the letter to Purcell. He was so close to us that he must have heard all that passed. Under this belief, I turned suddenly to him and told him to go instantly for Captain Brand, and to tell him that the will must be changed, or he would be ruined.

"His crafty, eager look so arrested me, that I gazed fixedly in his face for some minutes; and it seemed to me that I discovered a crime-stained and guilty soul in his eyes, for they haunted me long afterwards.

"And I distinctly remember the words of the man who had accompanied him, as they rode away under the trees:

"Gardez-vous, my friend! You English take great things sourly. Ma foi! you curse Mademoiselle Fortune herself when she smiles upon you the blandest."

"I heeded these words not at all then. I have recalled them one by one to-night from the hidden chamber of memory, and I protest that they hold their own significance in this daring plot.

"Do you read nothing in this reminiscence beyond a woman's idle vagaries of fancy?"

"Will you believe it only when I swear that the man Roland Mortlake, who stood on the castle's steps with me that night, and the man St. Udo Brand, who stood with me on the castle steps to-night, are one?"

"I call upon you, in the interests of justice, to find the proof of this infamous imposture. I appeal to you that you may do your duty by the dead, and unveil a monster of crime. What has Mortlake done with St. Udo Brand?"

"Perhaps he has murdered him. Will you let a possible murderer escape you because a woman points him out? How do we know that the news of his being killed in battle was not true? And being true, how do we know that Mortlake's hand was not the hand that destroyed the heir of Castle Brand?"

"How do we know that this plot, if sifted well,

would not reveal in the suitor you sent me to-night a red-handed assassin?"

"Come to me in the morning and tell me what you are going to do. If you are going to do nothing, then I will carry on the contest alone, and trace the history of Roland Mortlake from the bottom step of Castle Brand, where I saw him first, pace by pace, to the foot of the gallows, where I shall see him last."

"Yours respectfully,

"MARGARET WALSINGHAM.

"To Messrs. Davenport and Gay."

Late as it was she rang for the housekeeper, and gave orders that her letter should be conveyed to the lawyer's house that night.

"Tell Symonds to give it to Mr. Davenport himself, and to trust it to no one else," she said.

The housekeeper met the feverish flush of her young mistress's eyes, and took the missive from her hand with much uneasiness.

"My poor dear, you aren't strong enough for all this worrying and wearing," she observed, sympathetically. "I wish for your sake, deary, the colonel had lain quiet in his grave."

Margaret drew back with a sudden storm of grief, and shut the door, and Mrs. Chetwode went downstairs, sorrowfully vowed to herself that Miss Margaret would pine to death before she wore the colonel's wedding-ring.

"He lies quiet enough in his shallow grave," moaned Margaret; "noble, proud St. Udo! Oh, my heart! why was I doomed to be the Marplot of his life? He was so haughty in his abhorrence of low scheming—so constant in his love—so tender with his dying Lombard boys—so heroic, and so reckless of his own grand life, that I love him! I love him! And he is dead!"

She wrung her hands and wept such tears as make the heart grow old, and the life wane early; such tears as are only rendered by a nature generous and effulgent in its love as tropical sunshine, whose revenge is self-immolating as the essence of the Hindoo widow.

Towards ten o'clock the next morning the executors made their appearance in a chaise, and betook themselves to the library.

They found their troublesome ward already waiting them, with an expression of settled defiance on her face, as if she fully expected a sound berating from each of them.

Dr. Gay looked at her anxiously, and shook his head over his own thoughts.

Mr. Davenport laughed sarcastically, and frowned to hide the effect which her blanched cheeks made upon him.

"I'm sorry to have called you out too early to begin the search," said Margaret, bitterly.

"Too early? by no means, my dear," cried the doctor, seating himself cosily near her; "it's never too early to do what's right. Now we're all ready to hear what you have got to say."

"I have told you, surely, enough in my letter for you to act upon," she answered, "without having to say anything more. What do you think of the declaration I have made as to the man's identity?"

"Most startling!" said the physician, in a quiet tone, as if it was really not startling at all.

"What have you to say to it?" she demanded of the lawyer, with an anxious look at his impenetrable countenance.

"Consider the absurdity of your suspicions," broke in Davenport, "the childishness and impossibility of your premises. How could an impostor act out St. Udo Brand's history? How could he know Colonel Brand's most private affairs, and his friends, and write with his hand, and have the same appearance, and cheat everybody—we among the rest, who saw him when he was a boy as often as I have fingers and toes? Pooh, Miss Walsingham!"

"You wish me to marry Mortlake, do you?" she asked, with scorn.

"For heaven's sake don't call him that!" ejaculated Davenport. "If you call him that and he hears it, the Brand spirit will be very quiet for the first time if he doesn't end the slander in murder."

"It began in murder," retorted she; "that would be the fittest end; after all. But do not fear. I shall not alarm your colonel without proper cause. You really expect me to treat him as if he were St. Udo Brand?"

"Yes, until you have proofs to the contrary."

She sat with folded hands and pondered. An ashy pallor overspread her face. A mental gag was forced between her teeth; a mental rope was placed for her across a yawning chasm, and selfish hands were pushing her towards it, and selfish voices were urging her to cross alone.

"Very well," she breathed, firmly, "I will bring you proofs that you will not venture to discredit. When I send for you again, come as promptly as you did to-day."

The executors were forced to depart with this

arrangement, and rode back to Regis deep in discussion as to their ward's sanity.

How long Margaret sat alone in the library she could not tell—an ominous foretaste of the grim future had shrouded her soul, and the dark hours passed unheeded by. When she roused herself, it was to instant action.

She sat down before her desk and began to write a letter—her third appeal for help.

She wrote but one passionate sentence, then her head sank between her hands.

"Who knows whether I shall live until it could be answered?" she moaned.

Bethinking herself, she tore the sheet and cast it into the midst of the fire, and took a new sheet, dashed off again but one sentence, signed her name, thrust it into an envelope, hurriedly sealing it, as she feared her mind might change at any moment.

It was a telegram, and ran thus:

"LADY JULIANA DEVON.—Come at once to Castle Brand on a matter of life and death."

"MARGARET WALSINGHAM."

Then she dressed herself and drove down to Regis in the carriage, clutching the despatch in her hand and drawing back from view whenever she passed a wayfarer, trembling with fear lest her enemy should detect her in this move against his safety.

After an hour of feverish impatience, an answer came which satisfied her.

"I will come to-morrow night."

"LADY J. DEVON."

She went out to her carriage with a triumphant air; she felt that she was one move ahead of the colonel.

"Lady Juliana shall strip him of his disguise," she thought, "and the executors shall be present to see the exposure."

She stopped before Mr. Davenport's office, wrote a line on her card requesting that he and Mr. Gay would come to the castle the following evening about seven o'clock, and then she hurried home.

The next day passed with the anxious girl slowly enough; as the evening drew on, which she hoped would be the last of her enemy's imposture, her excitement became terrible; she was in that stage of overstrained endurance in which a trivial thing turns the brain.

She told the housekeeper to have a bedchamber prepared for a lady visitor, and heedless of her exclamations of wonder, directed her to send Symonds at a quarter to six to the railway station with the carriage, and to take whatever strangers were for the castle as secretly home as possible, so that no one in the village should know who they were.

"Lawk-a-merry!" ejaculated Mrs. Chetwode, "what's Seven Oaks a-coming to!"

She had two hours to wait for the coming of Lady Juliana, and she must live through the dreary time somehow; so, weary of the silence of the castle, she flung a large dark mantle about her, and went out for a walk upon the Waste.

It was nearing the shortest day of the year, and the early twilight was already darkening over distant hill and forest.

The dun leaves, heaped high under the oaks of the front park, were white with hoary frost, and crackled like paper under her feet, and, starting with every sound, she soon quitted the shadows of the trees, and paced over the sere turf down to the inky mere, where the long brown flags pricked up in spear-like spikes, and the dank rushes pierced the filmy ice at the margin of the water, and the hazel shrubs clustered close about the slippery banks, and hid them from the Waste.

She walked round and round in this dreary spot, while the dusk grew darker, and the frost fell whiter on her footprints; and, when fatigue began to demand rest, she chose a seat on the gnarled root of a giant willow, whose branches swept the ground on every side, or dipped into the mere at her feet.

She became completely absorbed in her thoughts, but presently a distant patterning, like rain upon the dry foliage, recalled her, with a disagreeable start. She opened the branches of her yellow-leaved screen and looked about.

Nearen came the patterning steps, slow and soft; then she heard a long sniff, and a swifter patterning of the coming feet.

Her heart stood still with horror.

She saw a dog leap into view, and circle slowly round the mere, his nose on the ground, his eyes flaming through the dusk.

The colonel's dog tracking her steps!

With what helpless fascination she watched the animal gliding like a phantom round and round, down to the verge of the mere, where she had bent to pluck a stalk, diverging a pace where she had diverged.

And behind the dog came Colonel Brand, with hands clasped, and drooping figure, and head down on his breast, moving his feet among the withered

leaves as if weights held them down, pacing along with the heavy and spiritless gait of an old man, or of one whose shoulders have been bowed by labour.

He looked not to right or left, but slouched on after his dog upon the bank, and, as he passed the woman in her hiding-place, she saw that in his face which no Brand of knightly English blood ever wore since Sir Hildebrand broke his lance at Cressy.

That crafty and sinister half smile, that green scintillating shimmer of the introverted eye, that gathered brow, seamed with the hideous lines of crime and cunning—could such a face belong to St. Udo, the undaunted? That coward's shuffle, and murderous, nervous hand clutching the empty air, or thrust into his bosom—could such belong to the gallant soldier who had faced death so often, and braved the Austrian cannon in the thickest of the fight? Thank Heaven, no! He lay in his hidden grave, but his bravery was glowing in a hundred glorious records, and his honour should be kept untarnished, if a woman's hand could uphold the proud escutcheon!

For the nervous hand this man had thrust into his bosom had brought out something which glittered with a steel-blue flash in the indistinct gloom, and he had come to a dead stand with it, and was looking at it with the glare of a hungry wolf.

He was but a few paces from Margaret Walsingham.

"I must have recourse to you again, my tiny talisman!" hissed Colonel Brand to his stiletto. "She insists on having you, and I am going to humour her."

He hissed these words through his teeth slowly, deliberately, as if it were a sort of joy to utter them aloud, but once, and then he thrust it into his bosom again.

And the woman tore off her heavy cloak and dropped it beneath the willow tree, and rising to her feet, she glided through the hazel copse across the Waste, and fled for her life, just when the snarling dog sprang with a howl upon her garment, and tore it to pieces fiercely.

(To be continued.)

ROUND THE WORLD.

CHAPTER XLII.

ROLAND crossed the deck to the companion-way, not venturing to look at or speak to either of the two mates, lest he should attract the attention of some spying mutineer to the change of sentinel and helmsman. He descended hastily to the cabin, where a light burned dimly.

At the end of the table, in his customary chair, sat Captain Wilcox, his face buried in his hands. He was alone, and was giving way to a despondency he had not yet exhibited.

He looked up at the youth's entrance, showing a face upon which his anxieties had traced many and deep lines, and eyes that seemed set in cavernous sockets.

Before him on the table was a pile of miscellaneous weapons. He had buckled a wide belt about his waist, and in this belt were thrust a brace of pistols and a sword.

"I feared you might not come back to us, Mr. Lawrence," he said, with a sudden lightening of his countenance, as he marked the brisk, business air of the young man. "You see we executed your directions faithfully. The two mutineers were taken by surprise, gagged and bound, and are lying on the floor of yonder state-room perfectly helpless. Mr. Hopkins, the first mate, is at the helm, Mr. Biggs, who most resembles young Talbot, took his place as sentinel. I secured all the arms from the hold, and here they are. The mates and myself are well armed."

"So far, then, all is well!" said Roland, selecting for himself a brace of pistols and hiding them in his bosom. "The mutineers believe me to be with them, heart and soul. They are eager for an attack, all but the two Englishmen, who will be on our side. I am come for brandy."

"We are four against twenty-six!" said the captain, gloomily.

"Say, rather, six against twenty-four," returned Roland, cheerfully. "Count the Englishmen in with us. I believe I shall be able to manage the twenty-four myself. I have no time to stop and explain. The mutineers may suspect me if I am long absent. I shall be back soon!"

He went into the pantry and returned with a demijohn of pure French brandy, an article reserved for the captain's private use.

He then went into the captain's room, and procured the medicine chest, with which he returned. He examined several phials, and finally selected two that appeared to answer his purpose. The contents

of these two he turned into the demijohn, mixing it thoroughly with the liquor, and said:

"Keep the mates on deck, captain, and do you stay here until my return. This business will all be settled in the course of an hour. The mutineers are not likely to discover my stratagem, but if they should I beg you not to let my sister fall into their hands!"

"I promise you that she shall not!" declared the captain; "she is in there praying for your success!"

Roland turned his gaze upon Lily's door, but he forbore to disturb her, since he had nothing decisive to report.

With a last injunction to the captain, he took up his demijohn and returned to the forecastle.

He found the mutineers anxiously awaiting his return. They had broken the whisky bottle in contempt for such plebeian beverage, and were awaiting the arrival of the warmer, more generous brandy. Not one individual among the twenty-six, except the two Englishmen, was completely sober. Talbot appeared the clearest-headed of the group, and even he was partly intoxicated.

It was perhaps owing to this fact that Roland had so completely deceived him.

"Come in, my young bantam," cried the Kanaka, as Roland entered the forecastle. "You've got the liquor, I see. Did you have any trouble in getting it?"

"Not a bit," answered the youth, with a forced laugh. "The captain's as gloomy as can be, and I didn't see the mates to speak to 'em. The captain acts as if he was afraid something would happen."

"He may well fear so," cried the Kanaka, "for something is going to happen. He is going to be paid off before long for some o' them blows o' his'n. He's been too handy with his fists, and somebody else is going to have the same chance. Pass along the liquor!"

Roland relinquished the demijohn to Talbot, who withdrew the cork, snuffed at the liquor, and ordered the men to pass up their cups to be filled.

"This is the real stuff," said the chief mutineer, his small eyes kindling with delight. "This 'ere's what the captain lives on, boys, while we drink what watered whisky."

He filled every mug in turn, and then poured a liberal allowance for himself into a tin soup basin, holding it up to admire the colour.

Roland had found a stray cup and had presented it to be filled, with the rest, and he now pretended to drink his allowance of liquor, conscious that the Kanaka had not yet begun to drink, and was looking at him keenly, though furtively.

His apparent enjoyment of the beverage completely disarmed any suspicions of him which Talbot might have entertained.

As Roland appeared to drink, muttering his satisfaction, the Kanaka seemed reassured, and quaffed his brandy in long draughts, smacking his lips, and otherwise testifying his enjoyment.

The remaining members of the crew were drinking and making merry, all but the two Englishmen.

"Why don't you drink, you two half-hearts?" cried Talbot, as he marked their abstinence. "A little of this brandy will warm your coward hearts to the right pitch."

"Whisky's good enough for me," said Jones, who still held his mug of whisky.

"I choose to go into anything with my eyes open," said Smith. "I ain't going to blind myself with drink—not if I know it. I'm willing enough to turn back. I want to go to the diggings. But as for going in to murder a good captain and officers, just to gratify the spite of a Kanaka, that's what I shan't agree to. If there's a man among you with as much soul as a fish, he'll say the same."

There was a brief silence, the mutineers turning their astonished glances on Smith, who met them with an expression of dogged determination.

"This is exactly my sentiments," exclaimed Jones, setting his cup down on his chest so hard that its contents flew up in a shower of spray. "I ain't going to help to murder the captain nor the mates. They're a good lot, and the cap'n didn't treat the Kanaka worse nor he deserved. As to you, young man," he added, severely, fixing his eyes on Roland, "you're a viper! that's what you are! The cap'n found you on a savage island, and risked ye, and gun you the best aboard, a good room; a seat at the cabin-table, and everything ye could ask for, an' this is the return ye make."

"Don't talk that way to me," said Roland, springing up in apparent anger, and managing dexterously to upset his cup of brandy. "I won't have it. The captain had no business to try to make a sailor of me. I'm an independent man. I'm going to the diggings. But, first, revenge—"

"Sit down," said Talbot. "No rows here. If them two don't want to jine us, they needn't. I've no grudge again 'em. The rest o' the men are with me, and we'll settle the business to-night, and then

put the English ashore at Granitin Island. Lots o' whalers stop there for water, and they may get picked up soon."

Tallot spoke huskily, and his eyes looked strangely bleared.

"Where is Granitin Island?" asked Roland, shouting, that his voice might be heard above the drunken uproar.

"Only a few leagues from here," replied Tallot.

"Taint much out of our course. It's a small rocky island of no account. No one lives there. I say, Lawrence, this brandy's powerful strong, and kind o' queer in the taste. Seems bitter. But I ain't had brandy for so long a time p'raps I've forgot the taste. I say, Lawrence," he added with a leer, "did you see the gal when you went below?"

"No," said Roland, briefly. "She was in her room."

"She's a little beauty, though," observed the Kanaka, his face flushing and his eyes glimmering. "She's one of the dainty ones, I tell you. Lucky for you, lad, she ain't your sister. You might be jealous of me for marrying her. She's to be my prize, the high-spirited little creature. Won't she scream and rave at first, though? But I'll tame the proud beauty. I'll take down her pride and her airs."

He spoke exultantly.

Roland arose to his feet, his eyes flashing with indignation, his lips curling in scorn at the wretch before him. His countenance expressed his anger at Tallot's presumptuous words, and he looked as if he could have felled him to the floor.

Tallot did not immediately perceive the change in the youth. He had been struck, at the close of his speech, with the singular silence that had begun to reign throughout the forecastle, and to his amazement he now beheld his confederates held in dumb motionlessness. Some of them were unmistakably asleep. Some were looking at him with blinking eyes, vainly striving to keep awake. Not one face, save those of the English, exhibited intelligence.

"What does this mean?" he demanded, in a spluttering voice. "Drunk, every mother's son of 'em. We're in a pretty fix."

He turned his face toward Roland, and encountered that angry look which rapidly changed to a smile of conscious power.

The Kanaka stared, as if he had been fascinated, at that bright, bold face, with its keen intelligence, and look of superiority, and the truth flashed upon his soul.

"You have drugged us, you young whelp!" he ejaculated, in a voice of thunder, endeavouring to shake off the lethargy which he felt creeping over him, and laying a vice-like hold upon his benumbed limbs. "You have tricked me! I'll have your heart's blood for this!"

He struggled to his feet, fairly foaming at the mouth. His yellow face deepened in colour to the hue of saffron. His eyes blazed like live coals. His breath came in quick gasps. He looked as if his soul were on fire. His countenance was absolutely terrifying.

The two Englishmen, regarding the scene and its author curiously, came forward.

The Kanaka did not turn his glance upon them. Glaring like an enraged demon, he shook off his heavy lethargy, gathered his strength, and made a spring at Roland.

The young man leaped lightly aside, and Tallot's blows fell on empty air.

With a terrible cry, he flew at his successful enemy, but he had not taken two steps before he was grasped by the Englishmen, who held his arms so that he was unable to move them.

He foamed and struggled and raged, entreating and threatening in a breath, calling into requisition all his giant strength.

But all was of no use—he was in the grasp of desperate men, and the lethargy he had endeavoured to throw off was creeping over him with fatal effect.

Feeling his peril, he called for his brother.

"Your brother and your cousin are both below, gagged and bound," said Roland, coolly. "Mr. Hopkins is at the wheel; Mr. Biggs and the captain are on deck. The captain has secured the arms. Your men are drugged, and will not wake up for many hours. You are drugged too, and are about to sleep for half a day, at least. You see that I have outwitted you—that the ship and its officers are safe, and that wickedness will be punished for once."

He turned, procured a rope that was near at hand, and quickly and thoroughly bound the Kanaka, pinioning his arms to his sides, and lashing him to his berth.

The task had scarcely been completed, when Tallot's curses died out entirely, and he was bound in fetters stronger than those of rope—the drug enveloping his senses like a heavy shroud.

Roland looked down upon his now unconscious figure with a long-drawn sigh of relief.

For the first moment since he had comprehended the peril menacing Lily, Roland could breathe freely.

"Mr. Lawrence," said Jones, approaching him more nearly, and brushing out his eyes with his coat-sleeve, "I beg your pardon for callin' ye a viper, and abusing ye. You've got a clearer head than Smith and me, and your heart's in the right place. I'm ashamed o' myself. Will ye shake hands with me?"

"Of course I will," said the young man, with a kind cordiality that charmed the two seamen. "We understand each other now, and will be friends."

He shook hands with Jones, and Smith begged him to extend the same kindness to him, proffering the most ample apologies, which Roland interrupted by bidding him say no more.

The young man then opened the door and looked out on deck.

Mr. Biggs and the captain were standing at the head of the companion-way, uncertain whether to approach the forecastle or to remain inactive.

They had heard the shrieks of Tallot and the noise of his struggles, and had feared for Roland's safety.

The captain would have gone to look after his passenger, but Mr. Biggs had withheld him, reminding him that Roland's orders had been imperative, and that the captain would only precipitate affairs by showing himself to the mutineers.

"They may be killing that poor lad in there," groaned the captain.

"If he wants us he'll call us, or fire his pistol," said the practical Mr. Biggs. "We've let him take the lead, cap'n, and he must see us through. There's no use going against his orders if we pretend to obey him."

The captain assented, but his anxiety was great, as was also that of the worthy second mate.

Their relief and joy may be imagined when Roland looked out of the forecastle safe and unharmed, and beckoned them nearer.

They approached him running.

"Come in, captain—come in, Mr. Biggs," said Roland, quietly, his countenance, however, betraying good news. "Here are your mutineers!"

The commander and mate entered the low, dimly-lighted room.

There were the mutineers, like so many senseless blocks of stone, some on the floor in berths, and some lying across their chests, but all unconscious in their drugged sleep.

Securely lashed in his berth lay the ringleader of all the mischief, Tallot, bound thoroughly and sleeping heavily.

Captain Wilcox could hardly realize his good fortune.

He looked at the drugged mutineers, at the Englishmen, at Roland, and great tears stood in his eyes, so long unused to weeping, and he held out his hand silently to his young preserver.

The heavy burden of anxieties he had borne so long rolled from his shoulders. His fears of fearful fate at the hands of his enemy were scattered, and his gratitude to Roland was unbounded.

"Heaven bless you, my lad!" he exclaimed, wringing the young man's hand. "If ever you fall foul of harm, just call on Ted Wilcox. I'll divide with you my last shilling, and give my right arm in your defence."

Roland received these overflowing thanks, and then escaped from the forecastle, to bear the good news to poor little Lily.

He found her still kneeling in her room. She looked up with start at his entrance, fearing the intruder might be a mutineer. Her face was pale as death, but full of a grand and noble courage and resoluteness impossible to describe.

Roland approached her and gathered her in his arms with manly tenderness.

"I see you are prepared for the worst, darling," he said, gently. "But Heaven has not deserted us. Can you bear good news, Lily?"

The maiden read in his smiling face the news he had brought. It needed not that he should explain. She knew that her prayers had been answered—that she was saved—and by the one she cherished and loved above all others.

CHAPTER XLII.

CAPTAIN WILCOX thus found himself short-handed, and obliged to make shift with the assistance of the two mates, the two English seamen, and Roland, who proffered his services, declaring that he had mastered the art of seamanship while on board the *Annie Colton*. The weather was, fortunately, good, the breeze strong and steady, and all things were favourable. Jones was put at the helm, releasing Mr. Hopkins, and Mr. Biggs assumed charge of the watch.

"We'll have to make the most of our slender crew," said the captain. "Jones shall constitute

your watch, Mr. Biggs, with Lawrence here to help. Smith will go into Mr. Hopkins' watch, and I'll help if needed. As we're going on now, we shall do very well. In regard to the mutineers, Mr. Lawrence, I think the sooner they are bound the better."

"There's no hurry," said Roland. "They won't awake for twenty hours."

"I'll take time by the forelock, though, and bind them," said the captain. "In twenty hours we may be in a storm, and not able to do it."

He picked up a coil of rope from the deck and went to the forecastle, followed by Mr. Hopkins and Roland, who assisted him in binding the drugged sleepers. The task well performed, the three returned to the deck.

"Mr. Lawrence," said the captain, as they halted, "you have delivered us out of our trouble so far. Suppose you tell us what to do next. Here are twenty-four mutineers. I can take them back to Honolulu, but in doing so I would lose time, and should gain no seamen. Yet it is clear I cannot go on with them as prisoners."

"The point is," said Roland, "to get rid of the ringleaders and keep the rest. According to Tallot's own words, at least half the crew were reluctant to join him in his schemes. Jones and Smith can tell us the names of those who were backward. The two Tallots and their cousin must be got rid of. Tallot spoke of Granitin Island, a rocky islet, on which he proposed to leave Smith and Jones. These chief mutineers might be left there."

This proposal met the earnest approval of the captain and mates. Jones and Smith were called on for the names of those who had at first held out against the persuasions of Tallot, and most of the crew were proved to be at heart quite friendly to the captain. Two, besides the Tallots and their relative, were shown to be treacherous and untrustworthy, and it was resolved that the five should be marooned at Granitin Island.

"That will leave nineteen sailors," observed the captain. "I will talk with these nineteen, and endeavour to win them over to us. Once beyond the persuasions of their leaders, they will be good and true again."

"Shall we make Granitin Island before daybreak?" inquired Roland. "Tallot led me to think we were very near it."

"Tallot did not know our latitude," replied the captain.

"It is a little off our course, though whale-ships often stop there when short of water, but we cannot reach it under two days. We are steering directly for it."

While the little party were thus engaged, Lily came up to the deck, her slight figure wrapped in a shawl, which also covered her head. Leaning on Roland's arm, she joined in the conversation, adding to the general stock some original ideas, which struck the captain as remarkably keen and shrewd.

As the excitement wore off, and all still continued sleepless, Lily and Roland paced the deck, while the strange spectral light gleamed down upon them from behind jagged masses of clouds, giving to Lily a weird and wonderful beauty, and to Roland a look of power and grandeur.

The night was pleasant, with the soft rush of waters, the occasional flapping of a sail, the strong breeze, and the white-capped waves. The soft, half-light lent an air of mystery to the wild scene, and the young lovers were in a mood to enjoy it.

After a while Roland sent Lily below to sleep, and soon after descended to his own room to snatch a hour's slumber. The captain followed his example, and one of the mates and sailors also went to sleep.

It was broad morning when Roland awakened. The clatter of dishes came to his hearing as he sprang out of his berth and hurriedly made his toilette. The cooks, two in number, and both regular seamen, with their lays, or interest in the whale-oil, were among the disaffected crew, and Roland wondered who had taken their place.

When he entered the cabin he found the melancholy Mr. Biggs engaged in laying the table. He had pinned about his skeleton-like figure a large table-cloth, which served as apron, and evidently considered himself the beau-ideal of a steward. The result of his labours was not encouraging. The cloth on the table was awry, and many little signs showed an unpractised hand.

Roland could scarcely refrain from laughing, and the task became more difficult when the worthy mate set on the food, and rang the cabin bell vigorously.

Lily and the captain speedily made their appearance. The latter looked blankly at the oddly-cooked messes before him, while the young girl, with lips whose corners would twitch in spite of her efforts at self-command, seemed absorbed in the contemplation of the floor.

"There," said Mr. Biggs, self-complacent, in-

interpreting the silence as that of admiration, "I flatter myself that I've outdone the cook altogether. Don't you think so, Miss Lily?"

"I—I presume yours is the French style of cooking," said Lily, demurely. "The French, you know, disguise their dishes. And these seem to be disguised. I'm sure I can't tell what they are by looking at them."

The melancholy mate was enraptured. He had been likened to a French cook, and by a young lady of wealth and taste. He felt that his various talents had at last met with appreciation, and his heart warmed toward the merry-hearted maiden.

He proceeded to explain the names of his dishes, which turned out to taste better than they looked. Lily, however, offered to cook the cabin dinner, but both the captain and Mr. Biggs protested so vigorously that she was obliged to retract her offer. It was finally decided that Mr. Biggs and Roland should serve the mid-day repast, and Lily should pass her time as usual on deck.

The wind and weather continued favourable, and the ship flew on in her new course towards Grantin Island.

Soon after nightfall several of the mutineers awakened, and were immediately taken out on deck, where they were addressed in the most severe and reproachful terms by Captain Wilcox, who appealed to their sense of honesty and honour and their better feelings.

None of these men had been bitter against the captain. It was noticeable that the leaders in the mutiny slept the longest, probably from having imbibed most liquor.

The address of the captain, backed by the weapons he displayed, not offensively, and the determined appearance of the skipper's five assistants, completely won over the men, who listened at first sullenly, then assenting. The captain followed up his advantage with an allusion to outraged laws, and punishments for mutiny, and, finally, offered to pardon all those who would return immediately to their duties, and forsake the wily teachings of the Kanaka.

Every man, and there were seven, immediately gave in his adhesion. Their countenances evidenced their sincerity, and they were released from their bonds and sent to the galley, where Mr. Biggs served out to them an allowance of hot coffee and supper.

The captain judged it best to confine Tallot and his four principal confederates, two of whom were in a state-room, undrugged, in the hold, and no time was lost in transferring them to their quarters.

During the night, at different periods, every one of the remaining twelve seamen, to whom the captain had decided to appeal, awoken, was lectured, sermonised, and threatened to such good effect, that each gave in his adhesion to the commander, declaring that they would serve out the time for which they had shipped.

"A bargain's a bargain, you know," said the captain. "You keep to your agreements and I'll keep to mine. You'll have something to show for your time, and will be thankful you didn't go. If it's true, the gold ain't all going to be dug up before we get back, you may be sure. Untie the lads, some of you. There's something to eat at the galley."

The men were untied and marched to the galley, where hot coffee and appetising food made them feel themselves again.

It was a risky experiment—that of loosing seventeen men who had been just engaged in a mutiny, but most of these had been driven into the revolt by fear of the Kanaka and his four friends.

Some were wild and reckless fellows, some were only thoughtless, and some were of that yielding disposition which drives its possessors to go with the tide. All, however, were to be trusted so long as they had not an unlimited amount of liquor, or a man like the wily Kanaka to lead them astray.

The captain understood them thoroughly, and felt himself competent to control them. They were his best and most willing hands, and his heart felt light again when the two watches had been organised, the cooks were in their proper places, and order had been restored.

After breakfast of the second morning, the captain and Roland descended into the hold. It was like a den of wild beasts.

The five men were shrieking and cursing, making a perfect Babel of sounds, and they glared like infuriated tigers at Roland, curling their fingers in an insane desire to clutch his throat.

"Less noise here," said Roland, in a tone of command, letting the light of his lantern fall full on the fierce, livid faces.

There was a moment's silence, then the snarling and growling recommenced.

"They want hanging at the yard-arm," said the captain. "Hanging would do them good. By George! I've a mind to try it. Hand the irons this

way, Lawrence. Ropes will stretch, but iron won't."

Unheeding the protestations of the mutineers, who had probably made the same reflection, the captain ironed them all.

He then tossed to each a piece of bread, which they were able to convey to their mouths, and gave them a can of water among them.

The captain and Roland then left them in terrible anxiety about their fate, returning to the deck.

Before dinner the voyagers caught sight of a blue line that the captain declared to be Grantin Island. About four o'clock the ship had approached so near that a cottage could be perceived on the shore, and domestic animals about it. No sign of human life was visible anywhere.

At five the Andromeda came to anchor in the little harbour, and preparations were made for sending the mutineers ashore.

(To be continued.)

THE VEILED LADY.

BY THE

Author of "Fairleigh," "The Rival Sisters," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XVII.

In a large and elegantly-furnished room, where the sunlight peeping through the half-closed shutters, added new and beautiful hues to the costly Brussels carpet, freshly gilded the golden supporters of the rich lace curtains, and polished the glistening mirror until it shone with increased brilliancy—there, upon a snow-white couch, his black curls forming a striking contrast with the immaculate pillow upon which they rested, reposed the abducted youth.

His sleep was disturbed, for at intervals he changed his position, meantime uttering unintelligible words, and throwing his arms about.

At length his violent exertions caused him to awake, and starting up in bed, he gazed around the apartment, as if in an apathetic stupor, with his senses veiled.

Slowly the large dark eyes dilated, and weakly pushing back the heavy lids which fell in confusion around his brow, he murmured:

"It is only a dream. I will go to sleep again."

And with these words he fell back upon the pillow and closed his eyes.

But slumber was impossible, and partially arising he again scrutinised the room and its furniture. A moment passed. He pressed his hands to his temples and sought to clear his mind; then slowly returning came the memory of the animated portrait, and once more viewing his surroundings, he in bewilderment exclaimed:

"This is not my room! Where am I, and how came I here?"

Still the bright rays in amber streamlets scintillated over the luxuriant profusion of rosewood, marble, and mahogany. Still that quiet, which seemed to partake of awe, pervaded the room, and still the youth gazed; and yet it availed him nought, no answer came to his question from the silence around, and no reply issued from his mind, where all was confusion.

Slowly he arose from the couch, and after bathing, prepared to dress. He paused abruptly as he saw, not his clothes, but others more rich and expensive. Then gazing in vacant wonder upon them, he ejaculated:

"What does this mean? I cannot tell, and yet there is a dim remembrance, a shadowy vision it seems, of riding—of eating—of going to sleep again—but my memory fails me there!"

He paused, again sank upon the bed, and for a few moments remained silent, then drawing a deep sigh, he bitterly continued:

"I must submit! I am a creature of fate—fate which allows the ocean waves to use me as their plaything, and teaches the wind to drive me hither and thither, even as a leaf! I am at the complete mercy of circumstances—so be it—no more will I rebel, but take life as it is given me."

And with this philosophical conclusion, thought expressed in a manner which showed that doubt and amazement still lingered in his mind, he proceeded to dress himself; but ere he had finished, he paused, and apprehensively said:

"I am very weak, and my brain seems clouded! Oh! must my strength also be taken from me? Spare me that, and let my mind be clear, and I will not repine! but to be weak physically as well as tortured mentally—oh, it is too much!"

And his head fell upon his hands.

Presently he was aroused from his sad reverie by a knock upon the door, and in tones strange to him, came the words:

"Come, Master Arthur, Mr. Wilton awaits you."

"Very well," he managed to articulate; and then continued, somewhat scornfully—as though he was disgusted with life and all pertaining to it:

"Ho! ho! so I am Arthur, am I? Well, perhaps I am."

And with these words he completed his toilet, and opened the door. Before him stood a lacquey, who conducted him through the richly appointed halls, and ushered him into a finely furnished drawing-room, in the centre of which stood a table loaded with delicacies which would tempt the most fastidious.

One person only was seated at the board. He was a man somewhat past the meridian of life, with a face, at the first glance, prepossessing, though a keen observer of human nature would have pause ere he made a confidant of him. His features were small, especially the nose, which was very narrow and low at the ridge, which, without detracting from his appearance, gave to it a certain look of calmness, partaking somewhat of sanctimony, and betraying a slight tinge of subtlety. His mouth was unusually small, and when he smiled curled slightly at either extreme, and caused two indentations in either cheek, which could hardly be called dimples, yet were a marked lineament of his physiognomy, and added a softness to his expression which rendered it almost spiritless. This, however, was mitigated and changed to a shade of cunning determination by the round twinkling eyes, which were set deep in his head, and gleamed out from beneath a pair of thin gray brows. When wishing to appear sad or deeply interested, he had only to drop the lids of his eyes, partially close his mouth, and his face was the picture of innocence.

Take him as I have described him, with the different and contradictory elements of his features partially expanded, and his lips parted in a smile, and not one person out of twenty but what would have declared that a kindlier or more honest face was never given to man.

But the youth, as for an instant he stood upon the threshold and regarded him closely, was not pleased with his looks. He felt a repugnance arising in his breast, which might soon grow to repulsion, perhaps to abhorrence.

Mr. Wilton, who up to this time had affected an ignorance of the youth's presence, now raised his eyes, immediately arose, and, with both hands extended, advanced to the youth, cordially saying:

"My dear, dear boy, you are here at last; now I ought indeed to be thankful."

"Why?" was the only answer, in low, ringing tones, and the speaker's black eyes were directed to his face.

This quick and unexpected reply somewhat disconcerted the gentleman, but he instantly regained his self-possession, and continued, with new fervour and urbanity:

"I am very sorry that you do not speak with more earnestness and pleasure, but you will ere long. Come, we will breakfast now, and then we will converse together," and he motioned the youth to a seat.

Mechanically the youth accepted it, and to the very polite attentions of his companion, vouchsafed only thanks and evinced no desire for conversation.

The repast being concluded, Mr. Wilton invited the youth to the library.

Being comfortably seated, the latter rather impatiently asked:

"Will you tell me, sir, why you have taken me from my friends, and why I am here?"

A slight smile hovered around Mr. Wilton's mouth as he somewhat ironically queried:

"Did you say 'friends,' my boy?"

That smile was repellent, and the manner in which the words were uttered roused the youth's anger, and flashing his eyes upon him, he exclaimed:

"I did say 'friends,' and dare you say that they are not? Tell me why you have stolen me from them—quick!"

Wrath was rising in Samuel Wilton's breast, but his face was placid and wore an expression of regretful surprise. In a moment he replied:

"I beg of you to be calm, my dear boy. I did not intend to asperse the character of your friends, but I said it when thinking of the grievous wrongs you have suffered," and he drew a sympathetic sigh.

The youth's resentment was scattered to the winds, interest usurped its place, and bending forward, he said:

"And how know you that I ever experienced any?"

"Why, it is but natural that you should," he returned. "Indeed, it would be very strange if you had not."

"You have not answered my first question," pursued Frank, a little petulantly.

"No, indeed, I haven't. Well, my boy, you must not think ill of me, or become excited if I speak a little harshly of some whom you know; wait patiently, and I will explain everything. I desired to take you

from the person calling himself Daniel Tweed, in such a manner that he would not know of your departure, for I can assure you it would not benefit you to remain with him. I wished to have you with me because I am your friend, and it is my duty to protect and care for you."

"Thank you," responded the youth, dryly. "But why are you my friend, as you profess yourself to be?"

"Why do you say profess?" repeated Mr. Wilton, in an injured tone. "I should think I had proved so, and have good and sad reasons to be."

"What!" ejaculated the youth, catching at the slightest word. "What do you mean by sad? Speak!"

Mr. Wilton's face became very serious, and for a moment he seemed preoccupied with thought; then, gazing affectionately upon him, he ably mused:

"Dear child, how much he looks like his father!"

That word dispelled every doubt, dislike, and suspicion, and grasping the other by the arm, while hope caused his eyes to dilate and his breath to come faster, he said:

"Did you know my father? Oh, speak; for the love of heaven, speak!"

Mr. Wilton drew his handkerchief, hastily dashed it across his eyes, and then inclining forward, said, in a low, tender voice:

"I did, my boy, I did."

"Oh, where is he?" gasped the perturbed youth.

"Oh, tell me! My heart stops!—tell me!"

The other again applied his handkerchief to his eyes, and then rejoined with evident emotion, at the same time raising his forefinger reverentially upward:

"He is in heaven, my boy!"

For a moment the youth trembled in every joint, and then, while his face wore a look of mingled happiness, love, and sorrow, he ejaculated:

"And my mother, my mother, where is she?"

Mr. Wilton rested his head upon his hands as if the question pained him, then he slowly and impressively answered:

"She is with your father!"

The youth's hands were clasped in speechless anguish, his pale face, with its large black eyes eloquently sad, was lifted towards heaven. A moment his form quivered, then he sank upon the sofa, and from his aching heart came the words:

"All, all alone! Now, oh God, I am in truth desolate."

"No, no, my boy," said his companion, placing his hand kindly on his shoulder, "I am your friend, your protector."

The touch of that hand ignited the fire in the youth's heart, and leaping to his feet, he cried:

"Don't touch me. I hate you!"

Mr. Wilton threw up his hands in pious horror, and compassionately said:

"My dear boy, the news affects you, and you know not what you say."

The tone was kind, even tender, and Frank felt that he had done wrong in speaking as he had. An instant he wavered, and then repentantly replied:

"Forgive me, I was hasty."

"Don't speak of it, my dear boy," said Mr. Wilton, indulgently; "grief causes us to say many things that we would not when calm."

The youth again resumed his attitude of despair, and for a few moments silence existed between them. At length he raised his head with a slow, weary motion, and tremulously asked:

"Will you tell me of my parents?"

"Although it will cause me sadness to recur to the time when your father walked about in health and vigour, and although it will bring tears of sorrow to my eyes, yet it is your right, and you shall know."

Here Mr. Wilton paused, and seemed deeply affected: after applying his handkerchief to his eyes several times, and drawing a long respiration, he continued:

"Your father and myself were companions at college, and between us existed a friendship which is rarely found between men, it might with justice be called love. After leaving college our life-paths were different, he going into a small town to practice medicine, and I coming to this town to engage in mercantile pursuits. The separation was painful to me, but one pleasure was left, one link which connected in fond recollection the present with the past, and that was our correspondence."

"Two years passed. The next letter which I received contained the intelligence of your father's contemplated marriage, and requested my presence at the ceremony. Eagerly I availed myself of his kind invitation, and when the time came, I left my business and started for the town in which he resided. In due time I arrived there, and was most heartily welcomed by your father. The next morning the nuptials were solemnised. Oh, how beau-

tiful your mother looked. I could have wept, I felt so happy, so thankful for my friend's joy."

Again Mr. Wilton hesitated, and applied his handkerchief to his eyes.

"Oh, go on! this suspense will kill me—go on!" and the youth gazed upon him imploringly.

"Let me regain my composure. I can never revert to it without its changing me, as 'twere, to a child," rasped Mr. Wilton in a very low voice; then sighing wearily, he resumed:

"I remained a few days with your father, and then sought my home, feeling very sad, yet I knew not why. Two years more flew by—years of bliss to him, as I knew by his letters. Shortly after this you were born. Oh, what soul-felt language the missive contained which gave me the information—what indomitable love for you every line breathed. Three years rolled away, and then came the dreadful intelligence of your loss.

"A band of gypsies had been encamped in the neighbourhood, and to them your abduction was attributed. Every effort was made to recover you; but proved fruitless, and the hearts of your parents were torn with sorrow. Gradually your mother pined away, and one year had passed her spirit left this lower sphere. A change came over your father—he never smiled after that."

"A year after these events occurred I again visited your father. I found him moody, dejected, and oppressed by morbid melancholy. But let me not dwell upon it—I cannot bear it. One morning during my stay I accompanied him on a visit to a patient. The horse which he rode was a high-spirited young animal, and I experienced much trepidation as I saw his mad leaps and violent struggles to break away from the restraining hand which held him. I knew your father was an accomplished equestrian, yet I could not repress my apprehension. On our way back the animal became furious, and rose continually upon his hind legs. In one of these frantic antic the steed lost his balance, fell backward, and—good Heaven!—crushed your father to death. I cannot tell you my feelings; words cannot express the horror, the grief that consumed my being. I had only one hope now, and that was you. I felt it a sacred duty incumbent upon me to find you, and rear you as my own. For years I have tried, and many times have failed, but at last you are with me, my dear boy—yes, you are here."

And with tears in his eyes Mr. Wilton concluded his narrative, then arose, and gazed silently out upon the street, as if to recover his equanimity.

The youth spoke not, but sat with his head resting upon his hands, while emotions that he could not define caused his heart to beat with more rapidity, and thoughts jarred and conflicted in wild disorder in his mind—thoughts that bewildered him, and filled his whole being with an indescribable grief. Suddenly he started, as if rudely awakened from a deep sleep, and one ray of light flew in upon his mind—one ray of doubt. Quickly he looked up.

Mr. Wilton was gazing upon him with a crafty, obsequious smile, which instantly became soft and dreamy, and advancing, he queried:

"Are you better, my boy?"

No reply issued from the youth's lips, but those large brilliant eyes were turned upon him with one continued flash.

Mr. Wilton coughed slightly, and asked:

"Why do you not speak? Have you no regard for my feelings?"

"I will be candid with you," responded the youth. "I doubt your interest in me."

A pained expression swept over the other's features, and for a moment his eyes were directed to the floor with a glance of melancholy; then he seated himself near where the youth was standing, and looking pleadingly into his face, said, in a low, injured tone:

"Oh, Arthur—Arthur! little thought I that this would be the reward of my labour; that the child of my dearest friend would distrust me. I cannot call you ungrateful. I can only say that your words have wounded me deeply," and tears actually dropped from Mr. Wilton's eyes.

In presence of such emotion as this, one with such a tender heart as the youth possessed could not but believe, and with a slight feeling of self-reproach he rejoined:

"Pardon me, I am very much excited and confused."

"Oh, with gladness," said Mr. Wilton, eagerly; "but, Arthur, you must, you will trust me?"

A moment the youth gazed into his face. It was mild, placid, earnest, and then answered:

"I will."

"Now I am happier, and we shall live in harmony and love together. I know it, for you are so much like your father."

"And his name, you have not told me," whispered Frank.

"Edward Sherman." And Mr. Wilton sighed.

"A question now recurs to my mind," pursued the youth, "which I have neglected to ask. How did you know I was with Mr. Tweed?"

"My boy," replied Mr. Wilton, with impressive sincerity, "I have had detectives watching incessantly. I received information immediately of your arrival. I telegraphed directions for your transportation here. A gentle, harmless narcotic was used, for I feared your naturally high spirit would cause you to rebel, and thus interrupt my plans. As I have before said, I make no charges against Mr. Tweed, but enough it is that he was your father's enemy."

"How did you know that I was he whom you wanted?" continued the youth, determined to be satisfied.

"Oh, you still mistrust me," said Mr. Wilton, mournfully; "but I can only say that your face, which is the picture of your father's, would prove your identity."

The youth could make no further objections, but reluctantly returned:

"Very well, I believe you."

"Now all my misgivings are dispelled!" exclaimed Mr. Wilton, gladly; "and you will make yourself perfectly at home and look to me for everything. You will want money—here, my child, accept it for your father's sake!" and he passed him a fifty pound note.

His first impulse was to reject the proffered gift, but the words which accompanied it overcame him, and he whispered his thanks as he received it.

"Speak not of thanks," said Mr. Wilton's eyes became humid, "it is your due, and if it gives you one tenth the pleasure to receive it that it does me to tender it, then I am satisfied."

As Mr. Wilton ceased, the door was thrown open, and a young man entered, attired in a showy suit of light blue and his hands encased in lavender-hued kid. A small, jaunty hat sat carelessly upon one side of his head, and in his right hand he carried a slender cane. His dress, manner, and movements pronounced him a brainless, superficial fop.

As he entered he threw his hat upon the sofa, emitted a prolonged whistle, and tapping his patent-leather boot with his cane, cried:

"How are you, guv'nor, got any change? I'm dead broke."

"My son, my son," said Mr. Wilton, reprovingly, "why will you distress me by being so boisterous? Do be more circumspect in your language," and a quick, sharp glance shot from his eyes.

The young man noticed the look, and more moderately responded:

"Father, we're never young but once; I am naturally merry, and therefore I'm not so much to blame."

"I know it, my son—I know it," rejoined the elder; "but I hope you'll become more steady. Now, let me introduce you to my young friend—Arthur Sherman."

Young Wilton sauntered forward, slapped his hand down upon that of the youth, and shouted:

"How are you? I'm glad to see you!"

"Thank you," was the reserved answer, and with a slight curl of the lip, Frank turned away.

"I say, Sherman," exclaimed Wilton, junior, "do you smoke? Here, take a cigar, and don't mope."

"Thank you, I do not use the article," replied the youth.

"The dence you don't; well, you will soon. Just get in amongst our set, A No. 1. We'll show you London with a vengeance—the theatres, casinos, and all that sort of thing, you know."

And this interesting young gentleman, having boasted of his station in society, and intimated that it would excuse any irregularity in his conduct, laid back upon the sofa and vigorously puffed his cigar.

In a few moments Frank excused himself and went to his room, where he remained until the hour of dinner.

In the afternoon the youth inspected the wonders of the town in company with Wilton, senior. It gave him much pleasure; still, there was a shadow which lingered upon the verge of his mind and threw a darkening shade over everything.

In the evening he remained in his room, thinking, continually thinking; but it was fruitless, and with a commingling of strange emotions, he prepared to retire.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"TWAS morning. Mr. Wilton, senior, sat in his library with his head resting against the palm of his right hand, while with his left he tapped impatiently upon the desk at his side. It was evident that the versatile gentleman was in an unpleasant frame of mind.

Presently the door opened, and a short, thick-set individual entered, bearing under his arm a green



[MR. WILTON A SUPPLIANT.]

bag, which pottifogging lawyers generally use to carry somebody else's brains in, to delude observers with the idea that it is their own.

Having removed his hat and wiped the perspiration from his brow, the stout person threw himself upon the sofa, and breathing heavily, said :

"Good morning, brother Wilton?"

The round twinkling eyes flashed, and he pettishly exclaimed :

"Brother?—the fiend, sir!"

"Ah! as you say—good morning, Fiend Wilton?"

Mr. Wilton's face became pallid with anger, and approaching the new comer, he placed his hand upon his shoulder, and looking into his face said, in a voice trembling with suppressed wrath :

"What are you here for? I know you, and should if you were disguised as an angel."

"Know me? Of course you do—you ought to; you'd be foolish if you didn't."

And he laughed coarsely.

Mr. Wilton turned his head away, and muttered, between his set teeth :

"Yes, and I am fool that I do."

"What were you saying?" growled the other,

"Nothing—nothing at all," he nervously returned.

The man made no reply, but stretching himself at full length upon the lounge, drew a meerschaum from his pocket, and having filled it from an india-rubber pouch, lighted it, and presently clouds of smoke were ascending from his mouth, while he laid gazing upon his companion with mock complacency.

Mr. Wilton's thin lips quivered, his nostrils dilated, and he irritably ejaculated :

"I hate tobacco smoke!"

"Indeed! It is a matter of taste. I like it," he provokingly responded, and continued smoking.

Mr. Wilton glared upon him one instant, then arose and paced the room with his hands clasped behind him, and his head resting upon his breast.

"Brother Wilton?"

The latter started, and choked down the oath that arose to his lips, and with as much composure as he could command, said :

"Well, what have you to say?"

"I want a bottle of Madeira," rejoined the adipose person, with a great deal of assurance.

Mr. Wilton shook with resentment, and advancing with clenched fists, he said, in tones hoarse and hard :

"How dare you insult me thus?"

"Stop, Sam—do you remember—"

Mr. Wilton's knees bent beneath him, and with ashy face he shrieked :

"Spare me—spare me! Let me not hear it—it makes me cold—it chokes me!"

And he sank into a chair, while his hands grasped the arms as if he would tear them from their places, his teeth chattered, and his breath came in short, quick gasps.

The recumbent individual smiled with satisfaction, and after smoking in silence for a few moments, again said :

"I want a bottle of Madeira."

The merchant arose, still trembling, and with mock politeness muttered :

"Certainly, Mr. Kenneth, with pleasure," and rang the bell.

Presently a servant appeared, and Mr. Wilton gave the necessary order.

"Did you send for the best?" queried the smoker.

"I have none but the best," was the forced answer.

"And haven't since—"

"Silence, man! Will you keep your rascally tongue still?"

And the merchant stood over him with a look of alarm and painful supplication upon his features, while his chest rose and fell beneath the force of the tempest within.

Ere Mr. Kenneth could reply the door opened, and a servant entered bearing a tray with bottle and glasses thereon.

Having placed them upon the table, he turned to leave, when the portly individual shouted :

"Here, bring a plate of cake!"

The servant hesitated.

"Shall he not, Mr. Wilton?" asked Mr. Kenneth.

"Certainly," replied the merchant, and tried to smile, but it terminated in a grimace.

The servant disappeared, and presently returned with the desired article.

Mr. Wilton turned round, and laid his head upon the desk, while at intervals his form quivered.

The other paid not the least attention to him, but having laid down his pipe, helped himself liberally to the cake, and then, with no regard to ceremony and ignoring the glasses, grasped the bottle, placed it to his lips, and drank at least one-third of its contents.

"Wilton, I say, take a glass; 'twill do you good."

The merchant looked up—his face was haggard. Bending a glance of scorn and hate curiously mingled upon his tormentor, he returned, in ringing, bitter accents :

"I curse the day I saw you; you have made this fair earth a perfect Hades for me."

"You're Sam Wilton, and you know it!"

The merchant's face became livid, rage dispelled

every other thought and feeling, and with a howl of ferocity he bounded across the room and grasped the other by the neck.

The corpulent person slowly wound his arms around the slight form of his assailant, and raising himself partly up, hurled him from him as if he had been a child.

As Mr. Wilton fell to the floor some feet distant from the spot of the brief encounter, the victor again grasped the bottle, and holding it near his lips, said :

"I hope I didn't hurt you, Sam, but I swear I will if you ain't careful," and again the wine gurgled down his throat.

Slowly the merchant regained his feet, and muttered :

"Oh, if I dared, I would end your accursed life!"

"What did you say, Sam?"

And the man's hand was upon his throat; his glowering eyes rested upon his face, and his hot breath wafted across his cheek.

"Oh, nothing, nothing," gasped Mr. Wilton, in terror; "take your hand away quick!"

Mr. Kenneth dropped his hand to the shoulder of his companion, and while his face grew dark with anger, menacingly hissed :

"Sam Wilton, I don't trust you, but so help me heaven, if you ever touch me again, or attempt to get rid of me, I'll tell to the world a tale of—"

That ashen pallor again shot over the merchant's face; that expression of imbecile anguish distorted his features, and falling on his knees, he clasped the other by the hand, and moaned in a voice of sepulchral hollowness :

"Oh, no, no—you will not! Strike me dead—torture me, but not that—oh, no, not that!"

"Remember, then, who I am, what I am, and treat me accordingly."

"I will—oh, I will!" groaned the frenzied merchant, "but, oh, it curdles my blood, it makes me frenzied—o-h!"

Mr. Kenneth smiled quietly, and resumed his seat upon the sofa.

Meantime Mr. Wilton had resumed his chair, and was yet under the influence of that mental agony which seemed to unstring his every nerve, and change him to a powerless, trembling semblance of a man.

A quarter of an hour passed, when Mr. Kenneth earnestly said :

"Are you asleep, Wilton?"

A clenching of the merchant's fists, a snarled oath, succeeded by a long-drawn sigh, was the only answer.

(To be continued.)



STONIO.

CHAPTER XIII.

JOAM BRITTO was by no means an unattractive man, either in form or feature; and excepting his fear of the supernatural, there was very little fear in his nature. He stood well at court, too, and Lady Hilda had often heard him spoken of as a most faithful and honourable soldier and excellent officer. His face was in his favour, especially as Lady Hilda had no reason to think him worse than he appeared.

Though she had not discovered that he loved her, she had detected that he did not like Prince Enrique, even as Britto had readily perceived that she was very far from loving the prince.

Thus there existed between Joam Britto and Lady Hilda a chord of sympathy—springing from a mutual dislike of her affianced husband, Prince Enrique.

There were many in the court of King José who suspected that the Lady Hilda cared very little for the prince, for her manner towards him had ever been cold and haughty.

But the whole court believed that Joam Britto was ready at any moment to lay down his life to serve Prince Enrique. Lady Hilda alone had suspected not only that Britto disliked the prince, but that he hated him intensely.

Therefore, as we have said, there existed between her and the officer a chord of sympathy which required only a slight touch to cause it to vibrate.

This touch was given at a moment when her heart was most ready to be affected by it, at a moment when her soul was agitated with fear for the life of a man for whom she had suddenly conceived a passionate love, though she was not aware that the absorbing interest she felt in the security and escape of the stone-cutter was more than deep gratitude for his noble daring.

Eagerly, therefore, she was about to accept the offered services of Joam Britto in behalf of Stonio, when the sudden entrance of Prince Enrique caused the officer to instantly turn from her and bow to the throne.

The door of the apartment had been left open by the retiring guards, and the prince had ascended the stairs to the vestibule rapidly. His steps had been heard by those in the observatory, but were supposed to be those of one of the returning guards. As the prince entered others were heard ascending the stairs.

He scarcely returned the salute of the officer, who having saluted, instantly left the room, casting

[STONIO SEEKS REFUGE ON THE PLATFORM.]

over his shoulder as he did so, however, a glance of badly concealed rage and hate at the prince, unaware that the steady, penetrating eyes of the astronomer remained fixed upon his face until the instant he turned to descend the stairs.

"Curse him!" muttered Britto, as he hurried to overtake his soldiers below, and thinking of the prince; "he always is in my way. In another moment Lady Hilda would have asked me not to be eager in the search for the mysterious stone-cutter, whom many say is a noble in disguise, and then I should have established a hold upon her confidence which might lead to my desires. Perhaps she loves this Stonio? Who can say? The court is full of intrigues, and why should not Lady Hilda have hers? I have been on the watch for one for a long time, ever since I detected that she disliked the prince, and I think I have found one at last. Certainly she takes a profound interest in this stone-cutter; and were he a mere stone-cutter, she, the proud heiress of one of the most stately houses of Portugal, would think no more of him than I do of my valet. He saved her life, she said? Oh, I heard something of that in the streets—runaway horses, a quarry—what was it? Ah, I remember now—and the stone-cutter acted the part of a hero. She said something about his saving her from mob violence; I must learn all about that. It all proves that the stone-cutter was sharply on the alert to serve Lady Hilda. Of course, therefore, he takes a deep interest in her, whoever he may be, and it is very plain that she has strong desire that he shall escape capture. Why? Because he saved her life? Bah! our noble ladies of Lisbon are not usually so mindful of the services of those below them, or Joam Britto would be higher in the world than he is. Undoubtedly there is an intrigue, and this supposed miserable stone-cutter is, as report says, a disguised lover, a hidalgó of high rank. Come, it is said he was active; stone-cutters are not usually so very nimble. They say he handled sword and battle-axe with the expertise of a veteran soldier; stone-cutters are used to handling only the tools of their trade. It is said he spoke several languages, and wrote a most clerky hand; now those are not common accomplishments among stone-cutters. Some say he was an Englishman; some that he was a Spaniard; others that he was a Frenchman, or an Italian—that during the riot he was heard to use each of these tongues. Now, it is very plain that Stonio, who is known only as Stonio, is more than a stone-cutter."

All this flashed through the active brain of Joam Britto as he turned down the stairs, on which he

passed two or three persons ascending, and at the foot of which he ran against Don Diego Alva.

"Oh! it is you, Don Alva!" he said, as each recovered from the shock of the collision.

"Ha, Captain Britto!" replied the superintendent, as he recognised the officer, the whole hall being lighted up by the torches and lanterns of soldiers, servants, and others. "Have you not caught him?"

"Whom?"

"Stonio."

"Oh, do you want him caught, Don Diego?"

"Of course. Why not?"

"It is said he rescued you from the rioters at the marble-yard; that but for him you would have been served worse than they served your assistants."

"True; though, as they tore those unfortunate wretches to pieces, I cannot see how they could have served me worse," replied Don Alva, with a grimace and a shrug.

"Then you have no desire to have him escape? Gratitude, you know—"

"Gratitude! Bosh! What is that to me? Gratitude to one of those dogs—the stone-cutters!"

"But why did he rescue you?"

"Why? How do I know? That is a nut too hard for my teeth to crack. That riddle makes me dizzy. Oh, as for me, Captain Britto, you may cut him into mince-meat. Yes, cut him to pieces, a thousand pieces. I hate him."

"You hate him?" asked Britto, detaining the superintendent, who was pushing on to ascend the stairs.

"Yes, I hate him. But let me pass. I accompany Prince Enrique."

"But why do you hate this stone-cutter so furiously, my dear friend?"

"Why? Oh, that is another nut that hurts my teeth," replied Alva, with another grimace. "Why he rescued me is a riddle that makes me dizzy; why I hate him so intensely is a riddle that makes my head spin like a top."

"But who is he?"

"Oh," cried Don Alva, escaping from the grasp of the inquisitive officer, "that is a riddle that is driving me mad!"

And with this he hurried up the stairs in a kind of fury.

"Ah," thought the officer, as he turned away, "it is plain that Don Alva hates the stone-cutter, and has a reason for it which he will not, or dare not, or cannot tell. But it is also very plain that he does not know who Stonio is. Señor Stonio, wherever thou art, and whoever thou mayest be, Joam Britto, Captain in the Royal Guards, is very

desirous to cultivate thy acquaintance, for he smelleth a rich fortune in thee."

And twisting his long moustaches until they fairly bristled, Captain Britto hurried on to urge the search for Stonio, thinking:

"I must be present when he is taken, for surely he will be taken. I must be present to see that he is not instantly torn to atoms. I must take care of him—for Lady Hilda and myself. 'He shall be my goose that lays golden eggs for nobody but Joan Britto.'

Prince Enrique, having barely returned the obsequious salute of his satellite, glanced rapidly about the apartment as Britto departed, or he might have detected the glance of hate and rage which was cast at him.

Neither Lady Hilda nor the stone-cutter saw this fierce and eloquent flash of the departing officer's eyes, for they had fixed their gaze upon the face of the prince as he entered.

"Ah," mentally exclaimed Lady Hilda, "here's one who can scarcely fail to recognise Stonio in his disguise. His perception will be sharpened by his hate, and the hates of Prince Enrique are ever born on the instant. If he recognises the heroic stone-cutter, he will not recognise him as the man who saved him from a dreadful death twice, but only as the man, the mechanic who compared me to an angel, and him to a demon!" for it was then that she remembered the fierce and haughty question of the prince to the stone-cutter when the latter was about to snatch her from the endangered carriage: "Dare you touch a noble lady?" had been the purport of the angry inquiry of the haughty noble to the heroic mechanic.

"Aye, or an angel, when a devil is near!" had been the defiant retort of the bold artisan, hurled into the teeth of the insulting hidalgos.

Lady Hilda knew enough of the vindictive and malignant temperament of the prince to know that from that moment he hated the man who had dared return insult for insult, and whose flashing eyes had said to him:

"Touch me, and prince though you are, I will trample you with the feet of a stone-cutter."

She had expected no return of the prince to lead her under an escort from the house of the astronomer; she had supposed he would merely send some of the guards, while he would find employment in hunting down and slaughtering the unfortunate rioters.

With great difficulty, therefore, she concealed, or strove to conceal, her agitation as the prince, sword in hand, suddenly entered the observatory, and stood in the presence of the disguised stone-cutter. The astronomer, who knew nothing of the meeting, and passage of sharp words between the prince and the stone-cutter, and whose eyes had been studying the features of Captain Britto, reflected in his mind as the officer disappeared.

"This Captain Britto is a shrewd fellow, full of ambition,avarice, and treachery. I trust Lady Hilda has placed no confidence in him."

Stonio, who had recognised the prince before the latter had had time to glance towards him, bowed very low, raising his hand to the black silk skull-cap he wore, as if making an extra salute to a person of rank, but really drawing the edge of the cap still further down upon his brow, recovering an erect posture as the eyes of the prince fell upon him, and keeping his own gaze on the carpet.

"You are very pale, and trembling, Lady Hilda," remarked the prince, after a steady and somewhat amazed stare at the silent stone-cutter.

"Should I not be, prince, when you rush into my presence with hands imbrued in blood," she replied, promptly.

"Ah, I had some little share in punishing a lawless band of the rioters, who would not be taken without a stubborn resistance," said the prince.

Lady Hilda shuddered, and not so much at his cool indifference, as the evident satisfaction with which he spoke of having stained his sword with the blood of unfortunate men whose wrongs had goaded them into vain resistance of their oppressors.

"I trust an escort is below, Prince Enrique. I am impatient to depart. You have been very slow in sending to my assistance—a tardiness I did not expect in you, and with which I am not at all pleased. I am ready, prince. Let us depart."

She had risen as she spoke, and was moving toward the door, but halted as three men, palace guards, who had followed the prince, came in, one after another.

"Patience, Lady Hilda," said the prince, in his cold, proud voice, as he continued to rub dry his sword, upon which he seemed disposed to bestow more attention than upon her. "Escort, indeed! I found that all the troops in the city had their hands full in scattering the rioters, and it was with great difficulty that I at length obtained an audience of the king. He was in no pleasant humour. I assure you, but at length he permitted me to detail a score of the palace guards to act as your es-

cort. There were fears that the royal palace might be attacked, and King José with great reluctance permitted me to draw off twenty of his trusty guards. It was fortunate he allowed me even that number, for on our way hither we encountered half a hundred of the flying rioters in a narrow street not too closely pursued, and had we been fewer in number they would have cut us to pieces before the pursuing infantry came up. But who is this second gentleman in black velvet?" he asked, and glancing toward Stonio. "He was not here when I left."

"My secretary, Prince Enrique," said the astronomer, calmly. "Senor Miguel, will you please ascend to the platform, and see if the careless soldier who went up there displaced my instruments?"

Stonio instantly understood the hint and turned to the ladder, and as he began to ascend, Don Diego Alva, just escaped from the inquisitive Captain Britto, came in.

"Good Heavens!" mentally cried Lady Hilda, as the thin, fox-like visage of the superintendent appeared. "The prince may not have recognised Stonio, but this man, under whom he worked, can scarcely fail to recognise him. It is true that Stonio rescued him from the wrath of the stone-cutter, but the heart of Diego Alva is incapable of gratitude. Greedy for gold, he would betray anybody for the half of the offered reward."

But Stonio, who was more apprehensive of the recognition of the green-eyed superintendent of that of the prince, and who had caught a glimpse of his face before Alva looked towards him, was careful to turn his back towards him, and to hurry up the ladder.

"Oh," said Alva, as he glanced about, "has there been an affray here since we left? Have the rascals been here? Pardon, prince. I should have asked your permission to speak."

"No matter, Don Alva. Now, Senor Distro, pray explain."

Lady Hilda, eager to shield the astronomer from the charge of having given aid and comfort to one of the rioters, said:

"Come, Prince Enrique. Am I to be kept here any longer? I can explain all," and she did so rapidly, taking care to give the impression, though not absolutely saying so, that the astronomer was absent from the room while she aided the rioter.

"He soon recovered," she said, in conclusion, "and departed by that door, hours ago. You must have met Captain Britto's troop below in search of rioters?"

"Why did you not let the rascal die?" demanded the prince. "Why soil your noble hands with the blood of a low-born fellow? I trust that the Lady Hilda, when she is my wife, may have more regard for appearance, if not for decencies. Were you a man I should place you under arrest, and so would every officer of the king. You have acted very wrongly."

He had no fear that she was not to be his wife, for the marriage had been decreed by the king, whose will was absolute law. He knew Lady Hilda disliked him, and he took pleasure in humiliating her. He had done it often before, in spite of her coldness towards him, and though Lady Hilda had ever scorned to permit herself to remonstrate with him, he knew she was deeply wounded thereby. Count Pedro had ventured once to speak of it, saying in conclusion:

"Keep all such speeches until after marriage, my dear prince. When she is your wife, of course it will be all right to use every means that may please you to humble her. Wouldn't do it before, prince. All well enough afterwards. Wouldn't do it before. It creates gossip."

"A fig for gossip," was the reply of the prince. "I want all to think she loves me that she can take no offence at aught that I may say. It is my way, and as she is to be my wife she must become used to my ways."

"True, very true," was the reply of the heartless old count, and therefore said and thought no more of the matter.

Thus it delighted Prince Enrique to rebuke Lady Hilda, as he did now in the presence of others. He had a belief that such conduct humiliated and crushed her proud, scornful dislike of him into fear, and since he could by no means win her love, he desired to make her fear him. He thought too, it highly lifted him in the minds of others, none of whom would dare to even frown at the beauty of the court, while he could affect to despise so noble a prize.

She scorned to reply now, and made an impatient step towards the door; but Don Alva, who had heard all attentively, said:

"The rioter was Stonio—at least those below say that Stonio was the man Senor Silva saw enter this room by the window there."

Lady Hilda, in her explanation, had been careful to conceal two facts: first, that the man whom she had aided was the man who had saved her life and

that of the prince; and second, that she knew his name was Stonio.

With a start and a shiver of dread, therefore, she heard the meddling words of Don Alva.

She glanced at the ladder, and felt reassured on seeing nothing of Stonio.

He had passed through the trap-door, and was upon the platform. He could not be seen by those in the room below, but he heard all.

"Stonio?" repeated the prince, "Stonio! What! the very fellow the great reward is offered for! You see the result of your ladyship's wisdom," he added, with a sneer.

"But it was one good turn for another," said Don Alva, wishing to somewhat ingratiate himself with Lady Hilda. "He saved your life, and it may be that you have saved his."

"He saved Lady Hilda's life!" repeated the prince, who either had never heard the name of the man who had acted so heroically, or had forgotten it. "What do you mean, Don Alva? Who is Stonio?"

"May I die if I know," replied Don Alva, misunderstanding the inquiry. "He is a mystery."

"What do you mean by saying that he saved the life of Lady Hilda?" again demanded the prince.

"Why, there is but one Stonio," replied Don Alva. "Stonio is the name of the man who rescued your highness, Count Pedro, and Lady Hilda from death in the carriage, and me from the stone-cutters. Stonio is the man who jumped in at that window, and now Lady Hilda is square with him, for no doubt he would have been captured but for her aid."

The prince instantly grasped the arm of Lady Hilda with a rudeness he had never attempted before, while his malignantly handsome face grew almost demoniac in its sudden fierceness of jealousy rage.

"Ha!" he hissed from his teeth, "the man to whom you gave the ring, Lady Hilda?"

"The man to whom I gave a ring?" she repeated, for the instant overwhelmed with confusion, for the question of the prince was the first intimation she had received that he or any one else had observed the act.

"Yes—do not deny it. I saw it done, though you were very sly. Doubtless you and he have met often before," said the prince, in a paroxysm of jealousy.

CHAPTER XIV.

PRINCE ENRIQUE had indeed seen the ring passed from Lady Hilda to the stone-cutter, a fact it did not suit him at the time to mention, but one that had been a thorn in his brain from the moment his jealous eyes had planted it there.

Although a man wholly incapable of feeling a passion of virtuous and generous love for any woman, he was secretly jealous of the splendid beauty of his affianced wife, who he very well knew disliked him, if she did not detest him.

The open and artless manners of the noble lady had often filled him with hidden rage, for she turned a kind face on all but him. Had she loved him, he would have treated her love with cold haughtiness, or made of her affection a mere pastime. But knowing that she disliked him, he was extremely jealous of her affability to others.

The young nobles of the court stood in awe of his terrible vengeance upon all who should dare to admire Lady Hilda too freely in his presence, or within his knowledge. Two or three, more rash than others, had ventured to openly toast the beauty of the heiress of Montredores, and to boast that she had at least graciously smiled upon their respectful admiration. But, as soon after this imprudence these boastful nobles were found dead in their beds or assassinated in the streets, with sundry circumstances which smacked strongly of Prince Enrique's agency in the matter, the boldest hidalgos of the court and army were careful to give no cause of offence to the petted, pampered bastard son of the king. Indeed, it was believed that King José himself feared more than he loved the prince. Thus, when Prince Enrique saw Lady Hilda try to conceal her gift to the stone-cutter, his jealous mind had instantly been fired with a suspicion that she and the stone-cutter had met before, or that the latter would be one ready to presume upon the generous condescension of the countess, and boast among his fellows that he sported a ring given him by the affianced wife of Prince Enrique.

Though he kept his knowledge of the gift of the ring to himself at the time, he conceived on the instant a resolve to make the stone-cutter a mark for the daggers of his Africans, those barbarians of his guard being usually his secret and unquestioning instruments of vengeance.

As the reader is aware, events were hurried rapidly upon the prince, and his Africans so cut by the attack of the stone-cutters, that he was obliged to think only of saving his own life while Stonio was in his sight.

But the circumstance, coupled with the defiance

of the favoured stone-cutter, had remained seething in his vindictive memory, and it was with a spasm of rage he now learned from Don Alva that the man, the rioter who had been aided by Lady Hilda, was the very man to whom she had given the ring, with evident desire to conceal the gift from him, her affianced husband.

Therefore his face was in a blaze of jealous wrath when, tightening his grasp upon Lady Hilda's arm, he uttered those insulting words at the close of the preceding chapter:

"Doubtless you and he have met often before."

"Your words are false, and worthy only of the man who is so base as to speak them, Prince Enrique," replied Lady Hilda, with a courage and defiant contempt of which he had never imagined her capable. "Unbind me, prince! You forget that I am not your slave—nor yet your wife," she added, while her splendid eyes flashed her hitherto hidden loathing of him and his pretensions.

It was very rare indeed that the haughty man ever permitted the emotions of his heart to be revealed by his features, and Don Alva, who could not recall the time when he had ever seen that dark and handsome face lose its expression of marble-like pride and calm scorn of other men, high or low, had started with surprise when he saw the countenance of the prince suddenly flame with the fires of enraged jealousy.

Don Alva now trembled as the prince withdrew his hand from the arm of Lady Hilda, and raised it as if about to strike her in the face for her last words.

"Prince! Your highness!" cried Don Alva, fearful that the noble was about to strike; for the prince, so rarely displaying violent, or indeed any, emotion, seemed infuriated by the scornful calmness with which Lady Hilda regarded his upraised hand.

Don Alva, being of the party of the prince with the escort from the royal palace, and a very reluctant participant in that affray with the retreating rioters of which the prince had spoken, had seen him cutting, thrusting, slashing, and parrying in the very hottest of the bloody struggle—the struggle of the retreating rioters to cut down the prince and the twenty guards before the pursuing infantry should overtake them—and during all that struggle the face of Prince Enrique had retained its haughty, prideful expression, his eyes alone blazing with the joy he felt in danger, and in inflicting wounds and death.

Yet now the words of a woman had sufficed to inflame the same face with all the darkest passions of a demon.

"Not yet my wife!" repeated the prince, slowly lowering his arm, and in a voice tremulous with passion. "What do you mean by that expression, Lady Hilda?"

"Prince Enrique," said the astronomer, advancing gravely, though there was a fire in his eye which made Don Alva think instantly of some one he had known before, "whether you have cause or not for your speech and gesture, it is plain that you forget the presence of these," and with a sweeping gesture he designated the three guards and Don Alva.

"They all know me," replied the prince, with a menacing glance at the guards, who shrank from the covert threat as if from a flame that had suddenly flared into their faces. "Those who dare gossip of what I say or do have tongues to lose."

The guards were strong and bold enough fellows, but they lowered their eyes to the floor as the prince spoke, for his words recalled a recent tragedy in Lisbon: two servants of the palace who, in their cups, spoken freely of a night adventure of the prince, of which they had chance to hear, were soon attacked at night in the Ruccio by a band of masked men, who bound them hand and foot, and flung them thus to perish in the Tagus. So little were esteemed the lives and rights of the people of Portugal at that time by the nobility.

Therefore the three guards shrank from the covert threat of the prince, and stared at the floor, lest he should see in their eyes something he might not like.

"They know me," repeated the prince, "but it seems that Lady Hilda does not. Come, countess, our escort is below, with a carriage. As we ride together I will speak more of this giving of rings and aid to a stone-cutter."

"I am not your slave," again said Lady Hilda, with a boldness that amazed both Alva and the prince; "nor am I your wife. You are not my guardian, and I refuse to ride in a carriage with you, Prince Enrique. Rather than do that, I will venture through the streets alone, and on foot."

Perhaps the prince thought he had gone too far. It was evident that he was surprised to find this defiance in one whom he had hitherto believed simply a young and beautiful woman with no will of her own.

Old Count Pedro had his doubts upon this latter, knowing her character far better than the prince;

but Count Pedro had held his private opinion in the matter unspoken.

To force the countess to leave the room, to drag her down several flights of stairs, to drag or thrust her into a carriage in the presence of gaping soldiery, was something even Prince Enrique dared not do. The scandal and gossip at court would be prodigious.

Such violence to one so rich, beautiful, and nobly born, would cover even him with disgrace.

All the gallants of the court would secretly sneer, even if the atrocity did not embolden many of them to speak their scorn aloud. All the ladies of the nobility would resent the open insult to their sex and order.

King José might pluck up courage to declare the intended marriage abandoned, and banish him, as he had sometimes threatened to do, to some Portuguese colony.

That Lady Hilda meant to resist, with all her strength of mind and body, was very plain from her determined face and defiant attitude. Drawn proudly erect, of tall and commanding figure, and as he well knew, with no little strength in her fair hands and splendidly moulded frame, her features pale but resolute, her magnificent dark eyes blazing with all the courage of her noble father, Count Roderigo Montredores, who had sold his life dearly in battling against Castile, Lady Hilda confronted the prince, and repeated her resolve, adding:

"Now force me into your carriage, if you dare!"

CHAPTER XV.

To force her from the room Prince Enrique knew would be impossible without the aid of Don Alva and the guards. Lady Hilda, unlike most court ladies, delighted and excelled in athletic exercises. Reared amid the mountains in which her ancestral home was situated, she was as active and strong as the prince himself, who, though tall and well made, was more of a swordsman than an athlete.

It is true that the native courage of Lady Hilda had been paralyzed by fear when the horses of the count were plunging towards the quarry, but it was because inevitable and mangling death, from which no resistance of her own could save her, stared her in the face.

The brutality of the prince had aroused the spirit of her dead father in her heart now, and she would, as she declared, rather die struggling than endure his presence in a carriage, shut in with him, to be insulted, taunted, and perhaps even struck.

The grasp of the prince upon her arm had been very violent; it had even bruised the flesh; it gave her pain, and aroused all that was combative in her nature.

The prince ground his teeth hard together; his face had not lost its seldom displayed wrath and fierceness, a fierceness almost ferocity, as he glared at the countess. He longed to spring upon her, drag her to the floor, drag her out into the vestibule, and thence from story to story downward to the street, if only to let her know that he dared do it, and to punish her for her defiance—and he almost her husband!

Don Alva and those others there had never seen so great a rage upon the face of man as was there in the face of Prince Enrique, duke del Sorno.

"You refuse?" at length he asked, in a voice hoarse with passion; and had he looked up towards the trap-door of the platform, he would have seen a pair of threatening eyes flashing from the dark background of the outer air—eyes fixed upon him—eyes which said:

"I am Stonio, and if you attempt to force Lady Hilda from this room, I shall certainly put a ball through your head with the pistol I hold ready, Prince Enrique!"

But a line drawn from the trap-door to the floor immediately beneath it would have reached the floor several paces in rear of the prince, whose face was turned towards the door near which Lady Hilda stood, facing him, and his eyes were fixed only upon her as he said:

"You refuse?"

"I refuse. Three times I have said so," she replied.

"You intend to do what?" he demanded. "You asked for an escort to the royal palace. Do you intend to remain here?"

"No," replied Lady Hilda, even in her flaming indignation mindful of the safety of Stonio, whom she knew was gazing down upon them, though she had not dared to glance upwards, lest the eyes of the prince might follow hers, "I do not desire to remain here. We have already sadly violated the hospitality of Senor Dietro. I will make use of the carriage your highness says is at the door below, and go to my home, to the palace of my guardian, Count Pedro."

"It is not fit that Lady Hilda's departure should longer be delayed," said the prince, who resolved to make a show of granting that which he was forced to yield. "As I wish to converse with Senor

Demetrius concerning certain important matters, I and Don Alva will remain."

This by no means suited the views of Lady Hilda, who wished every soldier, and especially the prince and Don Alva, to leave the house as soon as possible. So long as he and the superintendent remained so near the stone-cutter, the latter was in momentary peril of being detected.

She felt that fear for his safety would torture her heart beyond endurance, especially as she apprehended the disguised Stonio might have a conversation forced upon him by the prying Don Alva, who now began to cast curious glances towards the trap-door, as if he desired to go up and see what was to be seen.

At least so thought Lady Hilda, though in truth Don Alva's thoughts were becoming wholly concentrated upon the astronomer and his surroundings, the strange resemblance of Dietro Demetrius to one whom he had known years before, vexing his mind greatly. Nor had Don Alva forgotten the resemblance he had traced as existing between the astronomer and the stone-cutter, both of whom were strangers to him, and yet having something in their features which reminded him of a spectre of the past which often haunted his dreams.

Eager, therefore, to learn more of the astronomer, and eager to pander to the wishes of the prince, he said:

"Yes, with great pleasure I will remain with the prince. I am not at all sleepy—in fact, I have been so much excited that I shall not be able to sleep until night comes round again. Besides, there are to be several of the rioters broken on the wheel at an early hour after sunrise, and if I go to sleep I may miss the show. I shall be needed too, to give evidence against the captured rioters, especially the stone-cutters who attempted to make an end of me. I am at your service, prince, of course. I always am. I, in fact, make it a point of my existence to be at the service of noble and honourable men."

While the fawning superintendent chattered after this style, Lady Hilda, undetermined what to do, said to the astronomer:

"I had hoped, Senor Demetrius, that you would be able to ride in the carriage with me."

"I, like Don Alva, Lady Hilda, must place myself at the disposal of the prince," replied the astronomer, who then continued:

"Don Alva, I have heard you have rare skill in ancient coins. Here is a drawer full for your inspection."

Don Alva in truth had a weakness of extreme admiration for all coins, ancient or modern, but like many other great men he had a hobby—and his hobby was admiration of ancient coins.

Without pausing to wonder how the astronomer knew of his peculiarity, he at once became profoundly absorbed in the contemplation and inspection of the drawer placed before him by the Greek.

"Lady Hilda must excuse my acceptance of an honour which she refuses to Prince Enrique," said Senor Dietro, even while he placed the drawer of coins before Don Alva in such manner as to have the face of the superintendent toward the open window. "But if Lady Hilda desires company in the carriage, and will accept such as I propose, my secretary, Senor Miguel, shall go with her."

"Perhaps Prince Enrique may object to my being in a carriage with your secretary," said Lady Hilda, astonished by the proposal, but adroitly hiding her amazement under a scornful emphasis as she glanced at the prince.

He was twisting the tassels of his sword-hilt, and gazing at the floor when she spoke, meditating revenge for her defiance when she should be his wife.

He looked up quickly, a sneer upon his lips, and replied:

"Stone-cutters or secretaries, Lady Hilda, it is all the same to me how your taste may run. You are not yet Duchess del Sorno."

"Pray descend, Senor Miguel," said the astronomer, looking up; and while Lady Hilda feigned to be arranging her robe to hide her trembling, Stonio slowly descended the ladder.

"He will not be a talkative escort, Lady Hilda," remarked the astronomer, who had full faith in the security of the stone-cutter's disguise, for he believed that only the eyes of love could penetrate it, without close inspection. "Senor Miguel, will you please accompany Lady Hilda?" he added, as he took from the wall a wide-brimmed slouched Spanish hat, heavy with black plumes, and gave it to Stonio, who by this time had reached the floor.

But Stonio's back, in descending the ladder, was towards the prince, the superintendent, the guards, and Lady Hilda, and his face was turned from them as he received the hat from the astronomer.

"You are subject to chills, Senor Miguel," continued Senor Dietro, tossing a large cloak upon the shoulders of the pretended secretary, who, having so adjusted it and the hat as to allow very little of his face to be seen, now turned about.

He had already braved the recognition of the prince, and his great danger was from the more prying eyes of the superintendent.

The latter, however, was at the moment in an ecstasy of delight and admiration over an antique coin, the like of which he had never seen before.

The prince stood haughtily aloof, regarding Lady Hilda with a cold, careless gaze, beneath which he hid his secret rage.

"Your sword, Señor Miguel—you may need it," said the astronomer, presenting one which he took from a rack filled with weapons of various kinds, specimens of all the swords most in use at that time in Europe, and of many of more ancient times. "And these," he added, giving to the stonewall a brace of excellent pistols.

"Prince Enrique, as my secretary is a stranger in Lisbon, and unknown, will you please write him a privilege to pass and repass—anything your highness may see fit, so that he may not be molested on his return?"

"Write it, and I will sign it," replied the prince, haughtily, and deeply occupied with his own thoughts.

The astronomer rapidly wrote a few words, to which the prince attached his signature and rank as general in the royal army, without reading that which he signed.

"You will return, Señor Miguel, whenever it appears perfectly safe," said the astronomer, as he presented the pass to Stonio, with a slight but distinct emphasis upon the word safe.

Stonio, who had not opened his lips to utter a word since he had entered the apartment in his present disguise, fearing that his voice might betray him, bowed, and was advancing to the door, when Lady Hilda stood awaiting him, when Don Alva suddenly sprang up, turned and grasped him.

(To be continued.)

IODINE.—Whatever be the food of sea-weeds, it is certain that iodine forms a portion of their daily banquet; and to these beautiful plants we turn when iodine is to be manufactured for commercial purposes. The weeds cast up by the boiling surf upon the desolate shores of the sea islands would, at first sight, appear among the most useless things in the world; but they are not: their mission is fulfilled; they have drawn the iodine from the briny wave, and are ready to yield it up for the benefit and happiness of man.

THE COLOUR OF THE EMERALD.—Recent analysis of both canutillos and morallones from the Museo mines in New Granada have satisfied Mr. Boussingault that the colour of the emerald is due to metallic oxides, and not to organic matter, as suggested by Mr. Loewy. The canutillos are the crystal emeralds, the morallones the opaque ones. He finds the composition of the morallon to be—silica, 67·2; alumina, 19·4; glaucia, 12·7; magnesia, 0·4; with traces of oxide of chromium and lime.

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION.—*L'Union Médicale* of the 15th of February contains an article from the pen of Dr. Bertholle, wherein full details are given of a case of spontaneous combustion. The subject of it was a woman, thirty-seven years old, who was addicted to alcoholic drinks. She was found in her room with the viscera and some of the limbs consumed, the hair and clothes having escaped. The very minute description of the state in which the deceased was found shows that ignition could not have been communicated from without, and, to all appearance, this is an additional case to those already upon record.

THE KOLA NUT.—The Kola nut of Western Africa is highly esteemed by the negroes, and forms a very important article of commerce in the native markets. "The nuts possess," says a correspondent, "an agreeable, bitterish, astringent taste. They have the effect of preventing hunger, strengthening the stomach, and enlivening the mind. A man can perform a day's journey upon a single Kola nut, and if eaten at night they prevent sleep. I have long wished to introduce them to the notice of literary men and those who have much mental work. I can testify myself to their restorative properties when fatigued by mental application and oppressed by the heat of the climate. The way for Europeans to use them is thus: Take half a Kola or a whole one, well masticate, swallow the juice, eject the residue, then drink cold water; and 'the bitter water shall become sweet,' for a peculiar and very pleasant flavour is imparted to it." The tree furnishing the nuts is also cultivated in the West Indies and in Brazil, to which countries the seed has been introduced through the medium of the traffic in slaves. The botanical history of the tree is well known—one curious circumstance therein consisting in the fact that the seeds have sometimes four or more cotyledons instead of the usual dicotyledonary structure. The chemical nature of the seed is not so well known, and

it would be very desirable that further analyses be made of it to give the explanation of the properties assigned to it by the natives, among which we may mention that of purifying water. The bitter Kola is a totally different thing—probably it is the seed of some Anonaceae or of some Guttiferae. In the Kew Museum may be seen numerous specimens of the nut.

LIFEBOATS FOR MERCHANT SHIPS.—The Council of the Society of Arts offer the society's gold medal for a ship's lifeboat, suitable for the mercantile marine. The boats for which plans or models are submitted should combine, as far as possible, the following requirements:—1. Buoyancy sufficient to ensure that the boat be manageable when, in addition to the number of persons, and additional dead-weight (if any) she is intended to carry, she is filled by a sea. 2. The fittings or appliances by which such buoyancy is obtained to remain efficient under all circumstances of climate and temperature, as well as under exposure to sun, weather, and salt water. 3. Fitness for ordinary use as a ship's boat. 4. Strength. 5. Durability. 6. Lateral stability, or resistance to upsetting on the broadside. 7. Relief of water to the outside level. 8. Cheapness. 9. Simplicity of structure. 10. Lightness.

THE LIVERY-STABLEKEEPER.

The word "livery" is one of curious significance in law. In mercantile law it has often the same significance as delivery, in feudal law it has its peculiar sense in its seisin, in heraldic law it means the two principal tinctures taken from the shield and the charge upon the shield attaching the diplomatic seal to the grant of arms and wreathed under the crest. Livery servants wear the colours so depicted in great variety—crimson coats and yellow plush breeches, *argent et azur, sable et argent, &c.* Carriage-box cloths, hammer cloths, and linings—all in equipage is regulated by livery. In fiscal law it includes all shades of meaning, and covers also "to let," "to hire," "to entertain." A livery-stablekeeper is a personage of the greatest importance in revenue estimation. He is called so from having to ply his vocation principally with nobility and gentry, whose liveried plant comes frequently under his care; also because he entertains horses at board, lets horses and horse-drawn carriages for hire, and skilled men in the equestrian department to ride postillion, or drive "six-in-hand." Any horse or mule put into a stable to feed is recognised as at livery, any horse let for hire is held on livery.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has fully appreciated the position of the livery-stablekeeper, and while he has conferred sundry privileges on the class he has not given them exemption from taxes for nothing. Mr. Lowe has provided that it shall not be necessary for licences to be taken out by the livery-stablekeeper for servants except a servant employed to drive a carriage with any horse let to hire for any period exceeding twenty-eight days. This is certainly a very great favour indeed. But what is the *quid pro quo*? In that case he must deliver to an officer of Inland Revenue acting in the parish or place in which his premises are situated an entry in writing, duly signed, containing a description of the premises, and of the purposes for which he uses or intends to use them. He must cause to be legally painted upon some conspicuous part of the premises, or upon a signboard affixed thereto, his Christian name and surname, with the addition of such other words as shall denote all the trades or businesses carried on by him, and shall allow any Inland Revenue officer to inspect at all reasonable times; neglect in any particular infers a penalty of 20*l.* He must keep a set of books, in which he shall from time to time enter an account of every carriage, horse or mule standing at "livery" or otherwise on his premises, with the Christian name and surname and place of abode of the person to whom such carriage, horse, or mule shall belong. If he lets any servant, carriage, horse or mule for hire he must enter the name of the servant, the number of wheels on the carriage. The name and address of the hirer of the servant, carriage, horse, or mule, all must be open to revenue officers' inspection, and if there is any want of punctual attention to any of the details the penalty is 20*l.*

From this catalogue of duties the art of calligraphy will form part of the early study of all who would succeed, far less excel, in livery-stablekeeping. Pity is the due of many a poor farmer who may get a market-day shelter and a feed of corn for "his gray mare Maggie," with a riding saddle on her back. "Maggie" has been returned by her rustic master as used solely for the purpose of husbandry, or going to the market with garden stuffs, innocently ignorant of the record of his visit to the livery-stable until confronted by the exciseman, with "day and date," pursuing for inconvenient penalties;

and perhaps no less astonished will "the counter-jouper" be who on a special Sunday took a gig for a day, with his "Diana," into the country, without reporting in his declaration that he had hired from a livery-stablekeeper a trap, which he was bound to do within twenty-one days, under a like penalty of 20*l.*, or for not making any declaration at all. There is in this livery-stablekeeper's diary a flex and reflex light. It shows a wide range of horse owners and hirers who may try to evade the duties on the one hand, and it is checked on the other hand by personal returns, of which the livery-stablekeeper does not dream. A livery-stablekeeper "must have all his wits about him." In this, as in other professions, many good men rise from the ranks; and to have been once a "jockey" and now a postmaster, infers a little experience at the bar as well as in the stall. Milestones were sometimes seen as much by instinct as the visual organs, but obfuscation in the new livery-stable counting-house will not be so instinctively concealed under the hieroglyphics of the intricate distinctive entries required by the supervising functionaries.

THE WORK OF THE SEA.

THE work done by the sea is infinitely various, immeasurable in quantity, and of inexpressible value to the inhabitants of the earth. It is the one ceaseless worker, never resting and ever accomplishing the tasks it has to perform. The land and the sea may appear to some to be for ever fixed and unalterable, and the map of the world represents to them the geography of 6,000, or 60,000 years ago, the geography of to-day, and the geography of 60,000 years hence. Still, not only does geology show by the testimony of the far distant past the impossibility of this being so, but it has been given to man to see and record the constant rising and falling of the land, within the periods of history, and even to measure the movement with sufficient accuracy and such certainty as to enable him to venture predicting, to some extent, on the probable geography of the future.

The earth is born of the ocean. Continents and islands rise out of the sea, new, luxuriant, and vigorous; and, like themselves, they grow, mature, and do their appointed work; then wane and seem to die, though they do not die. They sink beneath the waves, apparently for ever; but only to be regenerated, renewed, quickened into life and born again remodelled. And the sea—the invigorating and everlasting mother—works this wonder.

M. Quenault, Sous-Prefet de Coutances, in a little book called "Les Movements de la Mer," has lately given us some exceedingly interesting facts, which he has gathered from old records, as well as from his own observation and other sources, respecting the sinking of the land and the encroachments of the sea on the coasts of Brittany, Normandy, and other places on the western borders of France. Thus, in the Gulf of Cordouan at the mouth of Gironde, the sea has advanced 730 metres within twenty-eight years; the buildings on the Pointe de Grave have often been destroyed and rebuilt, and the lighthouse is now removed, for the third time, more inland. The sea flows more than ten metres deep over what a short time since was a sandy beach. Twenty-five more years and the Atlantic will flow over the marshes of Soulac and Verdun; the Gironde will enter the sea by a second embouchure and the Isle of Cordouan, detached from the Continent, will gradually become a mere rock.

The legends which are recounted among the population of Brittany lead one to think that many places in the neighbourhood of the coast—to-day immersed—were formerly above the level of the sea. In their native poetry and with their passion for the marvellous, the country people refer these facts to supernatural agency, where the devil plays a prominent part. The bay of Douarnenez, where at high water the depth is considerable, is the site of a once flourishing city, the town of Ya, the capital of Cornouaille. At the south side, when the tide is low, are distinguished clearly five or six metres under water, Druidical remains, altars, portions of walls, and ruins of various monuments. Again, on the opposite side, near Cape Chèvre, they are to be found, though not so easily seen and not so numerous; but that they can be seen under favourable circumstances there is no doubt whatever. The fishermen there believe all the reefs and rocks in the bay to be portions of the ruins. In the sixteenth century, when the water in the bay was not so deep as now, the Canon Moreau was able then to follow the lines of a vast enclosure (enciente) of masonry, and above the sand, in shallower places, he discovered funeral urns, stone sarcophagi, &c. The traveller Comby also adds, that after a storm which excavated and scooped out portions of the sands, one could perceive traces of elm trees, disposed with a regularity which shows that a plantation existed at this spot.



THE VICTIM OF FATE.

CHAPTER XVIII.

More than two years after these events, a newly-married couple were breakfasting together at a cosy inn in Carlisle, at the southern edge of the famous Border marches.

Infused with a romantic spirit of adventure, Sir Charles and Lady Etherege had gone to Scotland for their bridal tour. It was not then, as now, overrun by tourists. Steam had not revolutionised the world and marched at space and time. The roads were wretched, as the present condition of their elegant travelling carriage which stood harnessed before the inn-door testified.

They had been rowed by Highland boatmen over Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine, and had walked on foot through the savage pass of the Trossachs, delighted with the glorious scenery they beheld, though the Wizard of the North had not yet sung its wonders in immortal strains, or thrown over the scene of their pilgrimage the glamour of romance. They had visited Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Stirling. Sir Charles had stalked deer on the heathen mountains, and Lady Clara had received the confidence of men who had fought under the flag of Prince Charlie, only a few years before, in the rebellion of 1745.

Both were returning from their trip in high health and spirits, and they were journeying to Merriwell Hall, the residence of the bride's father, Sir Mark Merriwell, a sturdy Yorkshire knight, who lived on his estate the year round, and was the hardest rider and heartiest feeder in the county.

Lady Clara was a fine specimen of an English beauty. She was tall, shapely, and graceful, with a bright complexion and dark eyes and hair. Daily exercise in the open air had won for her the blessing of perfect health. She rode close to her father when he followed the fox, and a leap over a five-barred gate never shook her in the saddle. She made nothing of a ten-mile walk before breakfast with her brother Tom, and could row a boat cross-handed with any young lady in the county.

Yet it must not be inferred that she was destitute of feminine accomplishments. She had been carefully educated, and was a cultivated musician, spoke French and Italian, wrote a dainty hand, danced well, and withal was not ashamed of being an exemplary housekeeper, resembling in these feminine accomplishments her mother, who had died when she was just budding into womanhood.

But her great charm was her entire unconsciousness. She had never been unduly flattered or petted, and did not look upon herself as a paragon of love-

liness and excellence. She had her faults. Her temper was rather quick—but her heart was warm and head sound. In short, she was

"A creature not too bright and good
For human nature's daily food."

As a married woman she might come in for her share of "praise, blame, kisses, smiles and tears."

How Sir Charles came to discover and win this jewel may be briefly told. He was a "college chum" of Tom Etherege, at Oxford, and saw Clara during the Christmas holidays. It was not a case of love at first sight on either side, but the young collegian was much pleased with his friend's sister, and long after his first visit to her home remembered her as a very charming girl.

But a trip to Paris, a season of London life, and the obvious necessity of running through his small fortune at a racing pace, dimmed, if it did not quite obliterate, her image.

The loss of his fortune saddened and tamed him. So soon as the death of a relative placed him in easy circumstances, his eyes were opened to the folly of extravagance and an aimless career. He had been careless and prodigal; he resolved that henceforth he would be steady and prudent, and that he might "give hostages to fortune," he resolved to marry.

Then he remembered that there was a young lady in Yorkshire who possessed a thousand charms: was her hand still free? would she look on him with favour?

He had sounded Tom, who had run up to London for a week, and received a satisfactory answer to the first of these questions. The second required a personal interview.

When Sir Charles proposed to go back to Merriwell Hall and spend a few days, his friend was delighted. The young men made the long journey on horseback.

When a handsome young fellow like our baronet, with good looks, a fair fortune and plentiful pluck, lays siege to a susceptible female heart, especially where there are no formidable rivals in the field, he has ninety-nine chances in a hundred in his favour. He commenced the attack with friends in the garrison. Sir Mark liked him, Tom was his faithful ally, and the young lady herself had a pleasant memory of their first acquaintanceship.

Sir Charles was a firm believer in the Scotch maxim,

"Happy's the wooing
That's not long a-doing,"

and acted in accordance with it.

Within a few days of his arrival at Merriwell Hall he declared his attachment and asked for the hand of his beloved. At the same time he made a

confession of his faults, told how thoughtless and imprudent he had been, also how clearly he recognised his early errors, and how firmly he had resolved not to repeat them. Clara listened, deliberated, and decided in his favour.

The happy lover flew to Sir Mark and asked his consent.

"What says my girl, lad?" asked the jovial knight: "is the lass willing?"

"She has accepted me," replied Sir Charles.

"Then take her, and take good care of her," replied Sir Mark, shaking hands with the young baronet. "But you must promise to bring her down often to the old hunting-seat, lad, to cheer up the old man's heart—for I shall miss her in the field and in the hall. She has been both son and daughter to me, for she is as brave as Tom and as gentle as her poor mother."

He drew the back of his hand across his eyes, and then, as if ashamed of his honest emotion, added, in a cheerful tone:

"And now the matter's settled, go and fetch her, and we'll go with the dogs and hunt the otter in Briarley Beck."

The wedding took place shortly afterwards, and was celebrated with a splendour befitting the genial hospitality of the lord of the manor, the humblest tenant of the estate having his share in the entertainments. The poor of the parish were made glad by an ox roasted whole for their benefit, and by barrels of rare old ale broached for their use. There was music, dancing, shouting, and a salute of fire-arms, and when the couple drove off in their travelling carriage, the housekeeper did not forget to throw a pair of old shoes after them for good luck.

Thus their wedded life opened on these young people with the happiest omens.

They sat at breakfast chatting about the incidents of their tour and anticipating the sports and pleasures of the month at the Hall which they had promised Sir Mark before going to the metropolis.

In a lull of the conversation, Lady Clara took up a late London newspaper, and ran over the items of fashionable intelligence.

"I see," she said to her husband, "that the Count of Villarosa is still the lion of the metropolis. He keeps himself before the public by daily freaks of extravagance and eccentricity. He is said to be the best dressed and the handsomest man in London. He will have to resign that claim when you enter the field, my dear."

To her surprise, Sir Charles did not smile at her little flattery, but a dark shadow crossed his brow.

"How I should like to see this fashionable hero," continued the lady. "Do you know him, Charles?"

"Yes," replied Sir Charles, with some embarrassment, "we have met."

"Then we will have the coveted lion at our parties. How delightful!" exclaimed Lady Clara, clapping her hands.

"He is not a man you would care to receive, Clara. He is a *voué*—a man to be shunned rather than to be coveted. We will speak no more of him, if you please."

Finding the topic unpleasant, Lady Clara dismissed it, at the same time wondering at the embarrassment the mention of this man had caused, and at the unusual reserve of her husband when speaking of him.

He was soon forgotten, however, as they resumed their journey, and found a thousand objects of interest as they travelled to the south.

A warm welcome greeted them at Morriwell Hall, as Sir Mark, so soon as he had chided the runaways, as he called them, for their protracted absence, sketched out a programme of amusements, the execution of which would occupy six weeks instead of the month of their visit.

The next morning at breakfast a servant handed Sir Charles a letter which had just arrived at the Hall by a mounted express. The man, he said, declined to dismount, and was waiting for an answer.

Sir Charles broke the seal, and hastily ran over the contents. His countenance grew pale as he read the missive, and when he had finished it he crumpled it up and thrust it into his pocket, begged to be excused for a moment, and hurried out of the room.

In a few moments he returned and resumed his seat at the table.

"No bad news, Charles, I hope?" said his wife. "None whatever—but vexatious," replied Sir Charles. "What a trouble property is. A lawyer's letter requiring my immediate return to London. It seems my signature is wanting to some papers, and yours too, my dear. We must ride over to the next town, and take the mail—we shall have just time to intercept it, if we make haste."

I am afraid Sir Mark swore a good round oath at the announcement.

"And we are going to draw the badger this morning," he exclaimed. "Can't you transact your business by attorney, Sir Charles?"

"Impossible, Sir Mark."

"Well," said the old gentleman, "you must provide to return directly you finish this business."

"Oh certainly," replied his son-in-law.

"I believe I'll run up to town with you," said brother Tom; "I must look after a gun and some fishing-tackle I ordered."

"Can you think of it, at a moment's notice?" asked Sir Charles, uneasily. "I shall be happy to execute any commission for you."

Lady Clara was surprised at this speech, for her husband was generally anxious to secure her brother's company. It seemed almost unctuous. Tom, however, was not to be put off, and left them to pack their travelling bag.

When they were alone together, Lady Clara said to her husband:

"Charles, will you let me see that letter?"

"I have destroyed it," he replied.

"You are certain that it contained no bad news?" she continued. "You looked very sad and disturbed when you read it."

"What do you suspect?" he asked, glaring sharply at her ingenuous countenance.

"Suspect!" she repeated. "Nothing, except that you are concealing some misfortune from me, and you ought to have no secrets from your wife."

"My dear Clara, I was only annoyed at being obliged to leave the Hall."

"Then we are to return immediately?" asked Lady Clara, in surprise.

"It was very foolish of me," Sir Charles hastened to say, "but you have petted me so much among you that any crossing of my plans makes me feel like a spoiled child."

Lady Clara said no more about the matter, and in less than an hour the young couple and brother Tom were rattling up to London in the mail at the rate of ten miles an hour.

CHAPTER XIX.

A SPLENDID room in one of the finest houses at the west end of London, a remarkably handsome, dark-complexioned man, with finely-moulded, aristocratic features, wearing a rich velvet dressing-gown fastened to his waist by a gold cord with heavy bullion tassels, sat in a luxurious arm-chair covered with crimson velvet. The fingers of the hand that held the amber-tipped tube of a Turkish hookah to his mouth were covered with costly rings, the settings of which held diamonds, pearls, and turquoise in their golden embrace.

The room was large and lofty, and so richly decorated and furnished that it outshone the finest apartment of St. James's Palace or Windsor Castle. It was indeed imperially magnificent.

The ceiling was covered, like the ceilings of the Louvre, with a vast canvas, on which was painted a mythological group from the pencil of Boucher. The walls were wainscoted with rare woods, forming a wonderful mosaic, and the panels were covered with the choicest productions of ancient and contemporary art. In four niches opposite each other were life-sized statues of nymphs, carved out of the purest Parian marble, holding wax torches in their hands. Over the white marble mantelpiece, which was loaded with rare specimens of Sévres china, with bronzes, and with one or two of Beauvais Cellini's masterpieces of silver-work, hung a trophy of arms, in which knightly shields, highland targets, Turkish yataghans, Armenian pistols, French rapiers, and Scottish broadswords were grouped together with wonderful artistic skill and effect. The top of the centre-table was formed of a single block of malachite. The carpet was a marvel of Brussels handiwork. A richly-carved bookcase surrounded with statuettes and busts of the greatest authors was stored with rare volumes in the English, French, Spanish and Italian languages.

There was a sort of studied negligence in the arrangement of this brilliant interior which suited well with the miscellaneous wealth of its contents.

A lacquey wearing a gorgeous livery of emerald green and gold entered quickly, and presented his master with a card laid on a silver salver. The gentleman glanced at the man with a smile, tossed the card on his table, and said quietly:

"Show him in."

The servant then introduced Sir Charles Etheredge, and retired, closing the door softly.

The Count de Villarosa, for the occupant of this splendid apartment was no other, sprang to his feet, and extended both hands to greet his visitor.

"My dear fellow!" he exclaimed, "this is indeed kind of you. You have accepted my invitation, as I hoped, with generous alacrity. Sit down."

"Say, rather," replied Sir Charles, gloomily, "I obeyed your orders promptly."

"How well you are looking!" continued the count, without noticing the remark. "Evidently you have found the fitters of Hymen not links of iron, but garlands of roses. Do you know, my friend, that I am unjust enough to suspect you of treason to our old and tried friendship? No invitation to your wedding, and yet you knew I was in London. Did you fear a rival in me, and fancy that at the last moment your bride would forsake the altar, and fling herself into my arms at first sight?"

"A truce to this badinage," said Sir Charles, curtly. "You sent for me; I await your commands."

"Why, what a tone you assume, my dear fellow?" said the count. "One would say you were a slave addressing his master, and not one good comrade greeting another."

"Count," said Sir Charles, coldly, "this irony is exceedingly unpleasant. I repeat, sir, what are your commands?"

"I have no commands, as you phrase it, my dear fellow," replied the count. "I was all impatience to congratulate you on your happiness, and to make the acquaintance of your bride. I have been told, though not by you, that she is accomplished and exquisitely beautiful, and I thought it a sin that such a pearl should be suffered to linger in the obscurity of Rumbledown Hall, or whatever your respectable father-in-law's barrack is called. I was anxious to produce her in the world of fashion—to give her the *prestige* of my approbation, and to crown her the belle of the season in the great metropolis!"

"You do us great honour," answered Sir Charles. "But Lady Clara has none of the ambition you attribute to her. She seeks to shine only in her husband's home. Were it otherwise, my means would not warrant our embarking in a fashionable career."

"But mine, my dear fellow—mine!" cried the count, with enthusiasm. "Are not my resources limitless, and my purse at your disposal? I have told you so again and again, and time was when you took me at my word."

"I believe I repaid you every penny I ever borrowed," said Sir Charles.

"Every penny, I admit it," said the count. "Therefore you can open a new account with a clear conscience."

He touched a silver bell, and the servant who had before waited on him made his appearance.

"Order my carriage and horses," said the count.

"You are going out, then?" said Sir Charles.

"Yes, if you will excuse me while I dress. I am going to drive you home, for I insist on an immediate introduction to Lady Clara."

With a wave of his hand he disappeared into his dressing-room.

Sir Charles Etheredge struck his forehead with his clenched hand, and starting to his feet, walked the room with unequal steps, a prey to the profoundest agitation.

"This bold, bad man in my house," he muttered.

"This serpent brought into my Eden, and by me!"

And there is no escape. I dare not resist. I am wax in his hands, and he could crush me like an egg-shell in his iron grasp, if he chose to do so. Villain that I was to marry her! Yet he promised to spare me; but what are his promises? He, who has no faith in anything sacred."

He sat down, buried his face in his hands, and passed a half hour of mortal agony.

The door opened at last, and the count appeared, radiant, richly dressed, and in the highest spirits.

"Look at me, my dear fellow!" he cried, laying his gloved hand on the baronet's shoulder. "Am I presentable? Shall I do credit to my ciccone? Do I look as if I should terrify the Lady Clara? Come! I am all impatience."

Sir Charles rose, and accompanied the count to his carriage.

A rapid drive brought them to Sir Charles's door, and they alighted, and went to the drawing-room.

Lady Clara, looking her loveliest, advanced to meet them, glancing expectantly at her husband, who stood, with his eyes cast on the floor.

The count surveyed his hostess, from head to foot, with a bold glance of admiration.

"Lady Clara," he said, "since this good lord of yours seems stricken with sudden dumbness, permit me to assume the privilege of a very old and intimate friend of your husband, and introduce myself. You must have heard this dear Charles speak of the Count de Villarosa?"

"Any old and intimate friend of my husband," said the lady, "must be a welcome guest in our house."

And she looked again inquiringly at her husband. The latter roused himself, and said:

"Forgive me, Clara. The count is an old friend of mine."

"Perhaps he has never spoken of me," said the count; "one of his old tricks. He was perpetually preparing surprises for his friends. I remember, once, he put a surprising trick on me."

And he eyed the baronet keenly.

"Yes, yes," muttered Sir Charles, in a strange way. "The count knows me of old. You may rely on his statements."

They were now seated, the count perfectly at his ease, while his host and hostess were greatly embarrassed. But he rattled away gaily, talking of the topics of the day, expressing himself fluently, though with a decided Castilian accent; until at last even Lady Clara began to take an interest in his conversation, and to admit, however reluctantly, that he was a brilliant and interesting man. She found herself, insensibly, on an easy footing with him, and one or two of his witty allusions and anecdotes surprised her into a laugh. Even Sir Charles, throwing off his mask of gloom and trouble, talked and laughed with his guest.

At last the latter rose.

"I must bid you good morning, my friends," he said. "I must not forget that you are still a pair of lovers, and impatient of the presence of a third party. But I cannot go without engaging you to grace the ball I give this day week. Alas! only a bachelor's ball, for beauty has not smiled on me, Lady Clara, as it has upon my friend. But within an hour I have felt that my entertainment, though it will be honoured by all that London boasts of band and distinction, will be, after all, but a poor affair, lacking your attendance."

Again the Lady Clara looked inquiringly at her husband.

"We accept, my dear count," Sir Charles hastened to say, "we have no engagement, and even if we had, it should be cancelled."

"And I may reckon, then, on your ladyship's presence?" asked the count, with a joyous smile.

"I go wherever my husband goes," answered Lady Clara.

"Then I shall be fortunate enough to see a great deal of you," replied the count. "For he and I are sworn friends and comrades."

He bowed himself out of the drawing-room and ran down to his carriage.

"Charles, what does all this mean?" asked Lady Clara, when they were alone. "Is this the man of whom you spoke so disparagingly?"

"He is not immaculate," replied Sir Charles, "but he is admitted into the best society—and has been presented at Court."

"But is it true that you were former intimates?"

"I saw much of him in former times," replied Sir Charles. "And I must add that I am under deep obligations to him."

"I hope that you are not still indebted to him—not in any way in his power?" said Lady Clara, doubtfully.

"An honourable man never considers an obligation cancelled by pecuniary payment. I am not an ungrateful man, Clara."

"I see to me, Charles," said the lady, laying her hand lightly on his shoulder, "that you answer my questions rather evasively, that your manner has lost the frankness I always admired in you. But I trust you, Charles—I trust my honour and

happiness in your keeping. You have presented this man to me—you have accepted his invitation for me—I trust it is all right."

"Trust me as ever, Clara," replied Sir Charles. "It cannot be that heaven will snatch from my lips the cup of happiness that I have only just tasted. Promise me that, whatever happens, you will not lose your faith in the man who adores you."

Lady Clara's countenance was lit up with a radiant smile, she drew her husband gently towards her, and imprinted a kiss upon his lips. Could she answer him more touchingly?

CHAPTER XX.

DURING the few days that intervened between that of his first visit and his grand ball, the Count de Villarosa made several calls upon the Ethereges. He was never received by Lady Clara alone, but always found either her husband or her brother present. Notwithstanding the affability of the Spanish nobleman, and the marked respect with which he treated his sister, Tom Merriwell could hardly conceal his dislike to the man whom his brother-in-law had chosen to introduce into his family circle.

At his club and about town the young man heard many stories highly discreditable to the Spaniard. Allowing for great exaggeration, there must be, he thought, a large modicum of truth in these narratives. Privately and earnestly he remonstrated with Sir Charles on his intimacy with the foreigner, but saw with regret that his representations were unheeded. Then he resolved to watch the Spaniard narrowly, for from the first he had suspected him of some evil design, and there was a mystery connected with his influence over Etherege which required probing. On his part the Spaniard was cold and cautious towards young Merriwell, always treating him politely, however. He would very gladly have withdrawn from him an invitation to the ball, but that was impossible, and the invitation, unwillingly extended, was eagerly accepted by the Yorkshire gentleman.

The reader has suspected the secret of Villarosa's wealth. It will be remembered that the shipwrecked pirate half doubtfully received Zampa's story of the hidden treasure. It proved, however, to be true. The Spaniard, after a series of adventures and escapes, succeeded in reaching San Domingo completely disguised. They sought the cave and found the concealed treasure untouched. It proved to be immensely valuable. The gold and silver coins and bullion were left by the adventurers untouched, being too bulky to remove without detection; but the specie was an inconsiderable fraction of the enormous values hidden in the rocky treasury. The precious stones were of almost incalculable worth, and they succeeded in carrying off on their persons the whole of this store. It was divided among them as fairly as possible, and then the two men separated, Zampa deciding to remain in the West Indies in concealment till the hour arrived for the outbreak which he knew was pending, and the Spaniard purposing to reach England, as the most secure asylum he could find.

One man alone held in his hands the earthly destiny of Pedro Ramon, otherwise Julian, Count de Villarosa, the Spanish colonist, ruined noble, outlawed rebel, and red-handed pirate. The Dominicans believed that Pedro Ramon had perished at sea, and the Spanish Government had accepted this theory. One man alone, Gaspar Perez, knew that Pedro Ramon was the masked rover of the Gulf.

When last seen, this Gaspar Perez was battling for his life with the stormy waves that tossed between the crippled barque and the royal gun-brig. Was he rescued or lost?

The existence of the Spanish outlaw hung upon this answer. The Spaniard would have given three-quarters of the hidden wealth that had suddenly become his for the answer that Perez had died and his secret perished with him.

However, it was worse than useless to dwell upon this prospective peril, the immediate danger of detection was to be avoided as speedily as possible. Fortune, which had alternately favoured and baffled his plans, now raising him to the hill-tops, now dashing him to the valleys, again smiled upon the outlaw. He escaped from San Domingo with his treasures undetected, and secured a passage for an English port.

Reaching London he lived for some time in obscurity. In a file of Spanish papers, which he discovered in a commercial reading-room, he read an account of the destruction of his barque in the midst of a gale in which it was asserted that no boat could live. Some days afterwards there was a published statement that all hands had perished. Again, and for the second time, universal opinion had blotted the outlaw from existence.

At last, dismissing all fears, he adopted the belief that no accuser lived to confront him. He emerged from obscurity, and, as the Count de Villarosa, surrounded himself with that magnificence and luxury

of which the reader has had a glimpse. It was when he burst his chrysalis and blazed upon the world of fashion that his relations with Sir Charles Etherege, then noted for his careless prodigality, commenced.

Had the outlaw forgotten Coraline? No. But her image no longer rose before him as a vision of delight. She was associated with a crime which, of all others in the long catalogue of his atrocities, most haunted him in his solitary midnight hours, most racked him with the tortures of remorse. Of the many spectres of his victims that rendered his dreams hideous, and made nightfall dreaded, the phantom of the murdered marquis was the most distinct. His slight but noble figure always led the van of the long procession of night visitors that trooped through the chambers of his tortured brain, each with a menacing finger pointed at their common assassin. He cursed the deed that sent the gallant marquis to an untimely end, and he doubly cursed the temptress who had armed his hand against her husband's life. He sought in the stimulant of wine and opium to forget the spectre, and he often succeeded, but when the face of the dead noble vanished, the face of Coraline disappeared with it.

Then he sought permanent oblivion in the substitution of one unblushing passion for another. The beauty of Lady Clara, so superior to that of Coraline, for it was transfigured by intellect and soul, awakened a craving in his wild heart and a resolve to wrest her from her husband.

How was this to be done? She was pure as snow, and never, under any circumstances, could her glorious nature be perverted. This he knew, for purity and truth assert their sway over the basest minds. The count saw that he could only succeed by ruining the reputation of her husband, by turning her love for him into hatred, and bringing about a legal separation between them. Then, and then only, could the count marry the divorced wife. This scheme would appear the wild and extravagant dream of a disordered intellect to those who knew not the Spaniard's limitless means of corruption and intimidation, and the unrevealed secret of his boundless control over the actions of the young baronet.

The night of the ball arrived. The count's mansion was a blaze of light. Every attraction that refined taste could devise and boundless wealth could procure, gave to the scene the splendour of a fairy pageant. A long suite of apartments, thrown open for the first time, received the guests, the most indifferent of whom were warmed to enthusiasm by the lavish display of gilding and carving, statues, pictures, furniture, and flowers they beheld. The choicest Italian music ravished their senses, exotic flowers loaded the air with perfume. The company, though large enough to throng the spacious rooms, was entirely composed of the élite of London society. Such had been the eagerness to be present on the occasion, that even peeresses had stooped to intrigue for invitations.

The count did the honours of his house with royal grace and dignity. Who that beheld him, welcoming titled ladies with chivalric courtesy, almost bestowing patronage on dignitaries of the church and state, could dream of the same man holding command of a pirate-ship and pointing his guns on a sinking vessel? Yet the truth of history exhibits stranger contrasts than the dreams of romance.

When Lady Clara, leaning on the arm of her husband, made her entrance into this splendid scene, a murmur of admiration ran through the crowded assembly. Never had a more radiant vision dawned upon the brilliant world of fashion. She was very plainly attired in white, wearing no jewels. In defiance of the fashion, her splendid raven tresses were undisfigured by powder, and a single red rose lit up the dark depths like a star.

Having made up her mind to attend the *fête*, reassured by the worth and rank of the company, she had dismissed all doubts and misgivings, and surrendered herself with child-like simplicity to the fascinations of the unwonted and unparalleled spectacle.

When her host solicited the honour of her hand to lead off in the dance, she accepted without hesitation, and the grace of her movements created as much enthusiasm as the royal stateliness of her step had excited when she first entered the ball-room. Sir Charles watched her with lover-like eagerness, enjoying the murmured compliments that buzzed about his ears, dismissing for the moment all care from his mind.

At the conclusion of the dance he was about to join her, when the count, having conducted her to a seat, led Sir Charles aside into the conservatory.

Young Merriwell, who noted every movement of his host, observed that they were engaged in earnest conversation. Feeling that an intrusion on their privacy would be unwarrantable, he had to content himself with scanning their faces and features. He saw that, as the interview continued, his brother-in-law began to look angry and distrustful. Villa-

rosa seemed to be insisting, Sir Charles to be remonstrating or imploring; there was no mistaking the energy of the pantomime. At last, as if to resolve all his doubts, the count inadvertently raised his voice, and said:

"You know the alternative—obedience or ruin!"

Merriwell's sense of hearing was so preternaturally sharpened by his anxiety, that he detected the answer, though it was uttered in a much lower tone.

"Spare me!" were the words he caught.

The listener drew nearer, protected by a mass of shrubbery.

"You know me," said the count, sternly. "It is my will. Linger here and you are lost."

He said no more but returned to the ball-room. Merriwell thought he had never seen such a picture of despair as the dead-white face of his brother-in-law presented—it was like the saddest and wildest countenance in Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment." He pressed his hand to his forehead for a moment, gazed into the ball-room with a piercing, agonised look, then rushing through a side-door, he disappeared.

Merriwell followed him—catching up the readiest hat and cloak he found in an ante-room. He reached the street just in time to see Sir Charles spring into a cab and hear him call out to the driver:

"To the Star Hotel."

Merriwell called a second cab, and said to the driver as he threw himself into the back seat:

"A guinea for you, my man, if you get to the 'Star' as soon as that carriage. Don't lose sight of it."

Both vehicles drew up before the hotel at the same time, and the two passengers alighting, dismissed the coachmen.

Merriwell confronted his brother-in-law.

"You here!" cried Sir Charles. "Thank God. But come inside—time presses."

"You are greatly agitated," said Merriwell, suspiciously, as he followed the baronet into a private room. "As your relative, as the brother of Clara, I have a right to ask what is the meaning of this mystery? From what I overheard, you are engaged in some secret undertaking for this foreign count against your will."

"What did you overhear?" exclaimed Sir Charles, whiter if possible than before.

"Only that he commanded your submission, and threatened ruin if you disobeyed,—but this was enough to alarm and anger me."

"He spoke the truth, Tom," replied Sir Charles, grasping his hand. "I can only tell you this, that he holds my honour—my life in his grasp."

"Then you have entered into my family, sir, under false pretences," said the young man, sternly.

"Dear brother, dear friend," said Sir Charles, grasping his hand; "if you knew all, you would pity rather than condemn me; yes, and poor lost Clara would absolve me."

"For her and for her happiness," retorted Merriwell, "you are answerable to her brother and her father, Sir Charles."

"I ask no better protectors," replied the baronet, almost humbly. "But I can tell you no more than I have told you already; and every moment of time is precious to me. I must do what I have promised or I am a lost man; perhaps the little I have told you will destroy me. But no matter—I must fly. I am in the power of a fiend. Whither he wills I must go. Return to Clara, take her home instantly, and to-morrow carry her to her father."

"Are you not going home now?"

"I have no home," answered the unhappy man, with a groan. "I am waiting for the night mail to Dover on my way to France."

"Madman! I will detain you by force," said Merriwell.

"Then, by all that is sacred!" cried Sir Charles, "you will destroy not only me but Clara too. Fly to her, I conjure you—hasten, or she, too, is lost. Promise, whatever happens, that you will write to George Gordon—remember—George Gordon, Hôtel du Nord, Paris."

Merriwell, uncertain what to do in this emergency, but alarmed, from what Sir Charles had said, for the safety of his sister, left the hotel without a word of adieu, and threw himself into a carriage, which, by his orders, was driven at headlong speed to Villarosa's house.

(To be continued.)

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES IN TURKEY.—The Grand Vizier has drawn up a report addressed to the Sultan on the new law, which has been approved by his Majesty, for introducing uniformity into the very complicated system of weights and measures hitherto prevailing in Turkey. According to this report the standard of length, called *zirai-achari* or metre, is to be "1-10,000th of the quarter of the terrestrial meridian," and the decimal system is to be adopted "in all measures of length, capacity, and weight." The

standard for superficial measure will be "a square whose side is equal to ten *sira* or metres;" it is to be called *marabba*, or acre. For measures of capacity the standard will be "a cube of *sukuri sira*—viz., whose side is a decimetre in length." This standard will be called *silichuk*, or metre. The standard of weight "is the *dirhem achari*, or gramme, whose weight in a vacuum is equal to that of an *achari sira*, or a cubical centimetre of water distilled in a temperature of 44 deg. contigraide." A standard *irini-achari*, or metre, and a *tekihi-achari*, or kilogramme, both in platinum, will be deposited in the treasury of the Imperial palace. All the Government offices in Turkey are directed to adopt the new system exclusively from and after March 13, 1871. The public, however, are given the option of using the old or new system for a period of three years longer—viz., to March 13, 1874. Arithmetical systems of measurement, and the use of the new system, will henceforward be taught in all the schools. The new law will not apply to coins, or to weights used by jewellers.

DANGEROUS GROUND;

or,
SHE WOULD BE A COUNTESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"Heart's Content," "Tempting Fortune," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXV.

I hold the world but as the world, Gratianno;
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

What! wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

Merchant of Venice.

MR. DINES, the solicitor trusted and employed by both the Earl of Montargis and Amanda, was, as our readers know, of such a pliant disposition that he felt no scruple whatever in betraying one client to the other.

Owing to the confidence he received from Amanda, he knew that she was about to be married to Maxwell, and that she was collecting a weight of evidence to prove his claim, which she would produce as soon as her alliance was completed, and overwhelm Montargis and his family. He was aware also that Fanny Garraway and Sir Gervase Fanshawe were to be united in the bonds of holy wedlock at the same time, and that they aided Amanda in establishing Maxwell in what they all thought religiously was his proper position.

As for Maxwell himself, he was rapidly recovering in his health and strength under the almost paternal care of Dr. Laxton. He was watched night and day by two stalwart fellows, especially employed for that purpose, and some conversation with these men, during a visit Mr. Dines paid to the doctor's establishment at Richmond, convinced him that they were incorruptible and could not be tampered with.

The third of August was the day fixed for the double marriage, and as July was rapidly drawing to a close, there was but little time left for the Earl of Montargis to take action in, if indeed such were his intention.

Mr. Dines had already written to the earl at Montargis Park, informing him of the ill success of his plan, and announcing Maxwell's return to the doctor's establishment at Richmond, whereupon the earl wrote to the solicitor requesting him to come down to the park at once.

Travelling by the afternoon express, Mr. Dines arrived at Nunninton and drove to the park in time for dinner, making the acquaintance of the ladies Gwendoline and Solina Maryland, and their haughty mother. He considered it quite a privilege to be on friendly terms with those charming creatures, whom he grieved to think would be dispossessed of their hereditary home by such a schemer as Amanda, and so unworthy a representative of a grand old title as Maxwell.

The earl was ill at ease during dinner, and it was easy to perceive that he was pleased when the repast was brought to a close, for he longed to have a private discussion with so shrewd a man as Mr. Dines; and indeed such was his state of mind that it was absolutely necessary he should have a confidant to whom he could unburden his mind and speak freely. Mr. Dines paid unremitting attention to the fine old crusted port, which had been laid down fully thirty years before, and which belonged to some celebrated vintage, to hear of which is enough to make the mouth of an epicure water, and he chatted in a desultory manner between each glass.

"These Garraway girls seem to have got on very well indeed," he began. "There is Fanny, who is going to marry a baronet with a grand old name and plenty of money. There is Amanda, your aversion and dread, who, if all goes well, will go to church with our young friend Maxwell."

"What good will that do her?" asked the earl, testily.

"She is very sanguine as to the result of her efforts on his behalf, and she expects to occupy this very house, and perhaps drink this very wine, for a dozen of which to take back to town I should be thankful," said the attorney, smacking his lips as he refilled his glass.

"You shall have it; but for goodness sake don't talk of such trifles when you see how agitated I am, and know what weighty matters we have in hand," replied the Earl of Montargis, with increased impatience.

"She must have done something disreputable at some period of her life. There are few people who have not," said Mr. Dines, musingly. "I will defy the best man to stand half a day's examination in a witness-box and come out unscathed if I had the getting up of the case. If we could only find out something against her and attack him through her, it would be a great move."

"So it would," answered the earl, musingly.

There was a pause, during which the attorney again applied himself to the wine, and presently the earl said:

"I always had great and grave doubts about the validity of my father's will. It was so unlike him to leave money away from us and give it to a comparative stranger. I wish I had gone to law about it at the time. Then there was the strange death of the old woman who used to live with this Amanda at the Tower. The verdict at the inquest was found drowned, but how she came in the water there was no evidence to show."

"Had Amanda any interest in getting rid of this old woman?" inquired Mr. Dines, who, in spite of the wine he had imbibed, had at his command all the acumen which distinguished him as an attorney.

"It is difficult to say," replied the earl. "That thought never occurred to me before. It is an idea which ought to be followed up. The old woman was my father's nurse during his illness."

"You say this woman—what was her name?"

"Blarrid."

"Lived with Amanda after she left your house. It is curious that an alliance should be formed between them. It is not improbable that Blarrid had some hold over her; but the woman is dead, and dead people tell no tales. Were any papers found upon her?"

"Not that I am aware of."

"Where did she live with Amanda?"

"At a place called the Tower, which is not far from here, and still belongs to Miss Garraway," returned the earl.

"Do you think we could go over it?"

"Certainly. The servants, I hear, have all been discharged, and an old man and his wife receive a small sum of money for taking care of the place. Indeed, if there were any refusal to admit us, I could introduce you by a subterranean passage which I found out in my boyish days, and which I caused my mother to make use of when she appeared as a ghost to the inhabitants of the Tower, trying to frighten the old nurse into a confession, if she had anything to confess, and Amanda had confided in her. But the whole question is so confused and such a mystery to me, I know not what to do. If my father sinned, his offences are being heavily visited upon me."

"We will go over the Tower to-morrow, my lord," said Mr. Dines. "I have an idea that we may discover something which will be of use to us."

"If you do, Dines," exclaimed the earl, with energy, "and can get me out of the mess in which I am, you shall not be a poor man any longer. Rely upon my gratitude."

"I know I can do that, my lord," answered Dines, "and I think I have shown a disposition to serve you."

The evening passed in conversation of a similar kind. But his lordship scarcely dared to hope that anything of a favourable nature would result to him.

On the following day they started at an early hour, walking across the fields to the Tower, the only inmates of which were an elderly man named Bates and his wife. These old people lived a most primitive life. They saw few friends, and always kept the drawbridge up. Once a week the dame went to Nunninton and laid in a stock of provisions. Their life was simple and happy, and neither the fear of man nor of spirits disturbed them.

As in the old feudal days, a horn hung suspended by a chain to a stone buttress, on which the drawbridge fell by the side of the moat. The earl seized the horn and blew a blast upon it which was audible for some distance off, and he could not help smiling as he did so.

"This is indeed going back to the olden days," he exclaimed, while he waited for a reply to his summons. "Do you know, Dines," he added, "that I would give anything almost to live peacefully with some lady and live in a place like this, undisturbed by care or state. I am fighting with this woman,

who pursues me like a fiend with terrible ingenuity, more for the sake of my honour and that of my mother and sisters than for myself. Depend upon it, Happiness does not come with riches. I am an all sufficient proof of that."

"I don't know, my lord," replied Dines. "Never had an opportunity of trying, so can't speak with certainty, though I should like to have the chance of doing so."

An old man with long grey hair appeared on the other side of the moat, and putting his hand to his mouth to make his words more audible, enquired the nature of the business on which the strangers came.

The earl replied that they were desirous of going over the Tower, and would make its keeper a handsome present if he would permit and assist them to do so.

Bates, the keeper, having no instructions to the contrary, and seeing a few shillings in prospect, which might increase his stock of tobacco and spirits, was glad to consent. The windlass went round, the heavy chains rattled and clanked, while the creaking old drawbridge gradually descended.

It frequently happened that Bates was called upon to do the office of showman to parties who were desirous of going over the Tower, and he had all the legends connected with it at the tip of his tongue, and he pointed out the spot where Hugh, fourth Earl of Montargis, slew his cousin with his own hand, for publicly insulting him, and after a variety of similar incidents, which seem inseparable from the olden time, he mentioned the death of Old Blarrid.

"She was companion to my mistress, gentlemen," said the garrulous old man, "and had gone out for a walk one day. I was at the drawbridge as usual to let her out, and she remarked to me—I mind it as if it was yesterday—'Bates, I am going to Montargis Park, and perhaps things will be very different here when I come back.' Soon after Miss Garraway—that's my mistress—came out, looking worried and harassed-like. She said nothing to me, indeed she rarely spoke to servants, except to order them about."

The earl and Mr. Dines looked at one another.

"Did you notice which way Miss Garraway went, and can you remember when she returned?" asked the attorney.

"She took the path which Blarrid had taken, but I did not stay long enough on the look-out to see if she came up with her. As to her return, there is something very remarkable about that. I never let her in, though I saw her with my own eyes in the court-yard when the dead body was brought up."

"Where is this unfortunate woman buried?" asked Mr. Dines.

"In Nunninton cemetery. My mistress gave her a fine funeral, saying she had been a good and faithful friend and companion to her, and she was grieved to lose her."

"Were you called at the inquest?" continued Mr. Dines.

"No, sir," replied Bates; "and on the principle of never meddling with what does not concern me, I made no statement; indeed, I do not see that I had anything of importance to communicate. The thing was plain enough. The poor old creature had leaned against the railing of the bridge to rest herself. That railing has been rotten any time these ten years past, as every man, woman, and child in the parish knows, down she fell into the water and was drowned. She was never much of a favourite of mine, but rest her soul, I say."

"Had she any friends?"

"Not that I know of, sir. None came to the funeral—no relations, I mean; and the few clothes she left have never been claimed, they're all upstairs in a room—even the things she wore when she was drowned—my wife hasn't touched a thing."

"Can we see this room you speak of?" inquired Mr. Dines, whose busy brain was at work.

Bates saw no reason why such an innocent request as this should not be complied with, and he took them upstairs, showing them the apartments, and at last conducting them to the room in which the property of old Blarrid had been placed.

The attorney looked over the clothes, paying especial attention to a heap which lay in one corner, mud-begrimed and discoloured. He even went on his knees before these unassuming and disreputable articles of wearing apparel, and turned them over and over until he found the pocket of the dress, into which he put his hand.

The Earl of Montargis watched him with eager curiosity, scarcely understanding the real drift of his researches, but hoping that good might come out of them.

At length Dines withdrew his hand, in which he grasped a sheet of foolscap paper, partly written upon, though the water and mud had stained the paper and made the ink run, so that the writing was not so legible as when first executed. Going to the window, the lawyer, unable to restrain his

Curiosity, hastily opened the paper and glanced over its contents. A smile crossed his face as he finished the perusal. Then he placed it in his pocket.

Bates watched this proceeding with some curiosity, but Mr. Dines slipped a sovereign into his hand, saying :

"I am the brother of the poor creature we have been speaking of, and this paper is a letter I wrote to her a few days before her death. It is of no interest to anyone but myself. As for the things that are here, you and your wife are very welcome to them. You need say nothing of my visit to your mistress."

Bates was well satisfied with this arrangement, and with his habitual want of suspicion saw nothing extraordinary in the arrangement.

The earl and his companion did not wish to see anything more in the Tower at present, and Bates led them to the courtyard, and lowering the bridge, allowed them to depart, with many protestations of gratitude.

"Now, Dines," said his lordship, as soon as they got outside, "what have you found? I am burning with curiosity."

"Something of great importance to you. I think I can save you from the troubles that environ you," answered the attorney, with a hopeful air. "But we can do nothing in a hurry. The matter must be one of arrangement between us. I have a bargain to make, for such a chance as this only occurs once in a man's lifetime, and if I let this slip, heaven only knows if fortune will smile upon me again."

"Make your own terms," answered the Earl of Montargis.

"I intend to do so. Let us talk as we walk along," and the attorney ventured upon the extraordinary liberty of linking his arm in that of the peer, his employer, with the utmost familiarity.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Wat to the knife. Palafoz.

The beginning of the end. Talleyrand.

A LONG and earnest conversation ensued between the Earl of Montargis and the astute London lawyer during the walk back from the Tower to the park.

The nature of it and the result will be presently apparent to the reader. When they reached the house a footman placed a card in his lordship's hand, saying :

"A lady and gentleman, my lord, who have been waiting more than an hour. They are in the west drawing-room."

Montargis regarded the card with a puzzled expression.

Handing it to the lawyer, he said :

"Can you make anything of that?"

On the card was written in pencil, "The Earl and Countess of Montargis."

"I am the earl. There are not two such titles in the peerage," his lordship went on.

"It is easy to understand," rejoined Mr. Dines, "Amanda and Maxwell have paid you a visit."

"Impossible! Would they dare to come in all the insolence of their supposed triumph and flaunt themselves before me in my own house?"

"However brazen the effrontry, such is nevertheless the case," said the attorney. "It is well that it has happened so. Ah!" he added, casting his eye on the hall table, "a letter for me from my confidential clerk, if I may trust the handwriting. I set him to watch Amanda, and perhaps he can explain what is at present mysterious. Have I your permission to read it, my lord?"

"Certainly."

Mr. Dines broke the seal, and read the letter with increasing satisfaction, which was visible on his face as he proceeded.

"It's all as plain as a pikestaff," he exclaimed. "My clerk Bloxham—capital fellow! always to be depended upon!—says that Amanda, fearing some action on our part which might bring about a 'slip 'twixt the cup and the lip,' would not wait till the 3rd of August, when her sister Fanny and Sir Gervase Fanshawe are to be united, but brought Maxwell up from Dr. Laxton's, at Richmond, and made him marry her before the registrar, intending to have the ceremony publicly solemnized again on the 3rd of August."

"I perceive," said the earl, "she is the wife of Mr. Maxwell, whose claim to my title she thinks she can establish, and counting her chickens before they are hatched, dubs herself a countess."

"You have a surprise in store for them, my lord," said Mr. Dines, rubbing his hands with great glee. "Well, yes," replied the earl, with a grim smile, "I think we shall astonish them. Will you come with me? I may as well have an interview at once with this woman, and it is advisable to be provided with a witness."

"By all means."

The information given Mr. Dines by his confidential clerk, Bloxham, was correct in every particular. Amanda grew anxious, and determined, come what might, to marry Maxwell, who was now quite

well and had got rid of his fancy that the snake was always near him. Once his wife, she felt that whatever happened to him she was safe, and could establish his claim, which was now her own.

Being a woman of an adventurous and daring disposition, she resolved to visit the earl at Montargis Park, lay before him the whole of Maxwell's case, and endeavour to come to an arrangement which would save long and expensive litigation. She wanted the title, and if he would relinquish that she was willing to make him a compensation in money.

So confident was she of success and so elated at having succeeded so far, that her arrogant presumption knew no bounds.

She did not rise when the earl, closely followed by Mr. Dines, entered, but made a distant bow, though Maxwell, showing the little mind he possessed, got up and offered his hand, which the earl refused.

"Pardon me," he said, "I can recognise no friendship between us."

"Nor do we wish for any," promptly replied Amanda. "We have come here peaceably enough, and with a hope that strife may be averted, but if defied we can take our own part."

"To your business, madam," said the earl; "though your presence here is an insult, I am willing to hear what you have to say."

"Very well," Amanda answered. "I will speak for my husband, who, through your atrocious treatment and that of your father, is scarcely able to speak for himself. Mr. Maxwell is, as I have already told you, the actual Earl of Montargis. I have collected proofs which my friends consider sufficient to prove our case, and I am here to-day to let you know your true position, simply for the sake of the family name, and the scandal that would ensue."

"You are very considerate, I am sure," remarked Mr. Dines.

"Sir," said Amanda, "it is easy to perceive that you are a traitor, and that you have been systematically betraying me to my enemies, while pretending to serve me, or you would not be here. My visit is to the usurper of the title of Montargis, and not to you, nor do I wish to address my conversation to you."

"My turn will come presently" replied Mr. Dines, looking out of the window.

"What proofs have you of what you allege?" enquired the earl, who was anxious to know the weight of the evidence against him.

Amanda produced a bundle of papers, which included an affidavit made by herself, respecting a confession of the late earl on his death-bed, respecting Maxwell's legitimacy, and his plot to keep him in ignorance of his real status in society. This, as we know, was false. The second was the evidence of Miss Happiman. There was a certificate of birth, the testimony of the keeper of the Richmond Asylum, and chief of all, the confession of the nurse, who had declared most solemnly, that Maxwell was the child she allowed the Earl of Montargis to steal from her.

The earl looked over all with great care.

"I am willing," continued Amanda, "to allow you and the members of your family a certain income, or if you prefer it a sum of money, provided you go away quietly. You may fight a losing battle with me for a few months, merely protracting your final overthrow, and putting off the evil day for a time. If so, you will lose all. Be wise, and meet me half-way, while I am in the humour, so that you may not be turned penniless into the world."

"I ought to thank you for your kindness, Miss Garraway," rejoined the earl, "but I do not."

"Am I to interpret that as an end to this interview?" asked Amanda.

"Not at all. You have said all you have to say, and now it is my turn, if I may trespass on your good-nature so far."

Amanda bowed.

"What would you say," the earl went on, "if I were to tell you that you are my prisoner, and that you will not be permitted to leave this room until you go in company of the police to Warwick gaol?"

"I should say you were mad," answered Amanda, who nevertheless turned deadly pale.

"I am not mad, and I do say it; you are a prisoner, Miss Garraway."

"On what charge?"

"One that you will find it difficult to disprove. The forgery of my father's will!" said the earl.

"I deny it!" cried Amanda.

"I have another charge. I accuse you of the murder of your companion, Blarrid."

"It is false!" almost screamed Amanda.

"I accuse you again of conspiring with this unfortunate young man to deprive me of my title and property."

"All of which can be proved," said Mr. Dines, stepping forward. "To begin with, there is a confession made by Blarrid herself, who heard the late earl's instructions to you, and saw you forge the will. To get rid of so terrible a witness against you, you murdered the inoffensive old creature, who

however, had taken the precaution to put what she knew in writing."

Mr. Dines held up the paper which he had taken from the dress which Blarrid wore on the day of her death, and which was really, what she represented it to be, a narration of Amanda's crime.

"I shall give you in charge of the police," the earl continued, "upon three distinct charges, and this young man—pointing to Maxwell—will go to prison with you, for conspiring to defraud, though I shall not press for heavy punishment against him."

In spite of this terrible denunciation, Amanda did not lose her presence of mind, which was wonderful.

Tying up her papers with a piece of tape, she said in a firm voice: "You will take whatever course you are ill-advised enough to adopt. I am fearless as to the result. You can have no proof of the alleged murder, and the confession of Blarrid, if genuine, which I will admit for the sake of argument, does not in any way affect Mr. Maxwell's claim. You may talk of conspiracy to defraud, but you cannot prove any such thing; he has friends in London who will see the matter carried to an issue. Prosecute me, and prove a forgery through the confession of Blarrid, of which you speak, and you will get back as much of the personality of the late earl as I have not spent and otherwise disposed of, but you will lose the earldom and the estates, your sole satisfaction, my punishment, supposing I am found guilty. My position is not quite so good as it was when I entered this house, but a compromise is still possible, though you will stipulate for better terms, and have a right to do so."

"I will listen to no compromise," said the earl, angrily. "You have been a curse to my family ever since you had the misfortune to darken its doors. Your ambition led you to commit the crime of forgery, and you shall be punished for it. It is likely that you have concocted the story of Mr. Maxwell's claim. However, it shall all be sifted in a court of justice. I will give up nothing. I will get back and keep what I can."

"In that case you ruin yourself and destroy me, for I swear that I have not concocted this claim," replied Amanda, whose pallor deepened.

"Your asseverations have no effect upon me," said the Earl of Montargis, coolly.

Amanda sat with her hands clasped and her eyes fixed upon the carpet, as if she had not expected the actual crisis which had taken place, and was wondering how she should act.

Mr. Dines went over to the earl and whispered in his ear:

"If legal proceedings can be avoided it will be best. She seems alarmed. Make her a proposition."

"Of what kind?" asked the earl.

"Offer her a small annuity if she will relinquish Maxwell's claim, and say you will not prosecute her for the forgery."

The earl nodded his head.

"Miss Garraway," he said, "in consideration of my making you an allowance in perpetuity of five hundred a-year and foregoing my prosecution, will you cause Mr. Maxwell to sign a renunciation of his alleged rights, and give up the money you have robbed my family of?"

Amanda smiled sarcastically.

"Oh!" she said, "you already find your case weak. Your solicitor, who is a man I will have struck off the rolls for his infamous behaviour to me, has advised you to make terms, but I will not listen to you. I have the power to bring charges against you, and the fashionable world shall be startled with a variety of scandal. The Persians whom you employed to kill Mr. Maxwell are in London, and will bear witness against you. Now will you have me imprisoned? Now are you so weak? I am a formidable enemy when enraged."

Biting his lips, the Earl of Montargis said:

"Dines, let a constable be sent for. I am in the commission of the peace, and will sign the warrant for this woman's committal."

"Do so at your peril," said Amanda.

The threat, however, had some effect upon her. She did not like the prospect of going to prison, and it was evident she would have been glad to make peace, rather than to have provoked war to the knife. But she had made up her mind to be a countess and a great lady. Nothing less than that would satisfy her.

When Mr. Dines went out her pallor and agitation became more marked. She did not doubt, in spite of his pacific counsels, that he had gone to execute the command with which he was entrusted, and send for a constable.

The indignity of being imprisoned and dragged away on a charge of felony, struck her as being peculiarly odious and unbearable. But with the confession of old Blarrid's which he had in his possession she did not question the earl's power to commit her.

"What should she do? In what way should she act?"

All this time Maxwell had taken no part in the conversation. When he saw that the earl and Amanda were silent, and that the lawyer had left the room, he got up from his chair, and facing the earl, exclaimed :

" You seem to take me for a man who has no mind. I understand fully that you are keeping me out of my rights, and I demand their restitution."

" You have been deceived, and merely repeat, like a parrot, what you have heard people say," rejoined Montargis.

" I will thank you to withdraw that opprobrious epithet," continued Maxwell, calmly. " You have called me a parrot, and unless I have an apology I shall consider myself justified in taking the law into my own hands, and redressing the grievous wrong under which I am suffering."

The Earl of Montargis, imprudently ignoring the fact that Maxwell had an irritable and impulsive temper, turned his back upon him in a contumacious manner.

" I demand an apology," cried Maxwell, " and failing that——"

He was interrupted by the earl, who turned sharp round and rang the bell, threatening to have him expelled from the house.

At that moment Maxwell seized a heavy walking-stick he had entered the house with, and struck the earl violently upon the head with it, causing him to sink on his knees. A roll of paper he had been grasping tightly fell from his hands, and Amanda darting forward, took it up.

A glance sufficed to show her that it was the confession of Blarrid, which Mr. Dines had given to the earl to overawe Amanda, and upon which so much importance was placed.

With the utmost rapidity she struck a match which lay in a tray on the mantelpiece, and setting fire to the document, watched it slowly while it burned.

Presently nothing but a heap of ashes remained of this incriminatory document.

The Earl of Montargis was not much hurt.

He quickly recovered from the slightly stunning effects of the blow which had been administered to him, and dreading further violence on the part of Maxwell, whom he regarded in some measure as little better than a wild beast, he grasped one of the fire-irons firmly in his right hand, and commenced retaliation.

A conflict ensued, which was terribly fierce while it lasted. Blows were given and received on both sides, but the earl's superior strength and agility soon told, and Maxwell was in a few minutes lying insensible on the floor, bleeding from a dreadful gash on his forehead.

Amanda sat perfectly still.

She did not care if they killed one another, or which was victorious in the contest. She was the wife of Maxwell, and she knew that she had a right to call herself Countess of Montargis if she could prove—what she fully believed she could do—his right to the title.

The evidence the earl had singularly acquired against her she had adroitly destroyed.

There was absolutely nothing she had to fear. Assuredly she was a lucky woman, and her star was in the ascendant. Her want of heart and feeling were singularly apparent at this juncture. She might have been supposed to have some regard and affection for the man she had made her husband, but the fact was she had married him for her own selfish purposes, and cared not whether he lived or died.

The earl was stricken with remorse when he saw the effect of his violence, for he feared that he had killed the young man. While he was ringing the bell violently for assistance, Mr. Dines entered, followed by a constable, and saying :

" This policeman happened to have come over to see you on some business from Nunninton, and finding he was in the servants' hall, I brought him up at once. But what is the meaning of this?"

" Do something to stop the bleeding," replied the earl. " He flew at me in one of his mad fits, and I hit him in self-defence."

Mr. Dines, calling a domestic, had the wound bound up, and when the blood was stanched, Maxwell was laid upon a sofa, a messenger being despatched for a medical man.

" Now," said the earl, " let us dispose of this woman."

He felt in his pocket, and looked on the floor for the confession, upon which he relied so strongly, but could not find it.

" Have you the paper upon which we are going to act?" he asked.

" Not I," replied Mr. Dines. " I gave it to your lordship. I am positive."

" Feel in your pockets. I have it not," said the earl, in a state of consternation.

Amanda enjoyed their discomfiture, but pointing to the ashes in the grate, said composedly, " There are the remains of that for which you search. While you were insensible from the blow you re-

ceived I burnt the document, and now defy you with increased hate and determination."

The earl and Mr. Dines stared at one another with blank amazement.

Rising, Amanda exclaimed, as she indicated Maxwell by a gesture of the hand : " I have spies outside who will watch this house and your miscreants. If you wish to kill my husband you are at liberty to follow your brutal inclination. A poor weak woman like myself cannot prevent you, nor shall I try to do so. It matters little to me. I shall prove his claim very shortly, and his death will not prevent me from being Countess of Montargis. You have injured him,—perhaps you will have the goodness and Christian charity to tend him until he recovers, when you can send him back to his hotel in London, the address of which I will communicate to you. I now have the honour to wish you good morning."

So saying, she moved with stately dignity to the door, leaving the earl and Mr. Dines perfectly astounded. They did not attempt to restrain her or impede her progress in any way, and she gained the carriage which was in waiting to convey her back to the railway station.

Our scene changes to a villa at Richmond, whose pleasant grounds slope down to the banks of the Thames.

It is here that Sir Gervase and Lady Fanshawe reside. They have with them as their guests Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell and Miss Happiman, Fanny's old friend and inseparable companion. Maxwell though much hurt by the Earl of Montargis, was offered no further injury, but sent back to London in the care of Mr. Dines. The blow on the head, however, seriously affected him. Whereas formerly he could drink large quantities without his ferocious instincts being excited, it seemed now that all that was bad in him was aroused, and while intoxicated he became a raving maniac.

The Earl of Montargis was in despair at the ill-luck which attended him, and thought that fate was against the retention of the property he had inherited from his father.

He at length determined to act fairly.

It was proposed to Amanda that the questions in dispute between them should be referred to four gentlemen of position at the bar, two to be chosen by Amanda, two by the earl or his advisers, and that the decision of these gentlemen selected as arbitrators should be considered final.

Amanda consented to this arrangement, the documents were got ready, the arbitrators chosen, and witnesses examined.

In six weeks the award was to be given.

Until the expiration of that time Amanda was asked to stay with Sir Gervase and Fanny at their residence at Richmond, which she gladly consented to do.

Farmer Thomas Garraway and his wife came up from Nunninton on a visit to their daughter, who had promised to buy back the old farm for them.

The delight of the old people at again meeting their children, especially in finding Fanny, was a charming sight to witness. The farmer became an altered man. His melancholy vanished, and his manner was once more bright and contented. Soon after their arrival, came John and his wife Jane. Sir Gervase received them all with the utmost affability, for he was not ashamed of his wife's relations. They were welcome to him, because they were welcome to her.

On the eventful day when the award was to be given by the arbitrators, Sir Gervase Fanshawe went up to London to ascertain the decision they had arrived at, promising to return immediately with the news.

He was only gone a few hours, but Amanda thought it an age, her heart palpitated until she could scarcely breathe, and she sat by herself in a little boudoir which commanded a view of the lane and the garden-gate through which Sir Gervase must come.

It was autumn now.

The pleasant summer time had gone, and the leaves lay thick on grass and pathway. An early frost had withered all but the most hardy flowers.

Presently Maxwell came in and sat down. She could see that he had been drinking, for his face was flushed and his cravat awry. At another time she would have rebuked him, but now she was too much occupied with her own thoughts to mind him.

Was she to be a countess? Was her ambition to be gratified after all?

" Why are you sitting there, ignoring my presence?" demanded Maxwell, who, like a child, grew angry when no notice was taken of him. " Am I nobody? Why did you marry me?"

" Be quiet!" said Amanda.

" I will not be quiet. These insults cannot be borne," continued Maxwell, growing very red in the face and looking ferocious and savage.

A terrible frenzy took possession of him all at

once, for pressing his hands to his temples, he muttered :

" My head! my head!"

Then he seized a chair and broke it in pieces with the greatest ease, selecting one of the carved legs as a weapon.

Amanda regarded him with astonishment; she had seen him in these fits before, but he had never harmed her.

Before she had time to utter a cry he was upon her, however, striking her right and left with the cruel and formidable bludgeon he had extemporized.

Suddenly a man appeared on the lawn, he sprang forward, dashed through the open window, and grasping Maxwell by the collar forcibly threw him from him.

The wretched man grunted and gibbered like a madman, and getting up, ran with wild cries to the river, into which he cast himself, disappearing under the tide which was rapidly running down.

" Amanda, Amy!" said the gentleman who had arrived so opportunely.

She spoke not as she lay on the floor, stunned and bleeding; but her eyes fast glazing in death, were fixed upon Sir Gervase Fanshawe, for it was he.

" I have now—good news for you," he continued. " The arbitrators have decided in your favour. Maxwell is Earl of Montargis. You are a countess, and vastly wealthy. Do you understand me?"

A smile wreathed her lips, and a strange light came into her eyes as his words fell upon her ears. She comprehended his meaning.

The knowledge of her triumph was brought to her, however, too late for her to glory in it. The next moment her spirit passed away; and Amanda Garraway, by marriage Countess of Montargis, ceased to exist, by the act of her lunatic husband, in the very hour of her success.

" This is awful!" said Sir Gervase, turning away sickened with horror.

As for Maxwell, his body was found three days afterwards at Barnes, and brought ashore by a fisherman.

Thus had an awful tragedy removed this man and this woman from the path of the Earl of Montargis, who was allowed to retain his position without further molestation.

Fanny wept sincerely for the loss of her sister, and found her only consolation in travelling about with her husband from town to town and country to country.

Farmer Garraway did not take to farming again. Fanny made him an allowance sufficient to live on comfortably, and on that he subsisted with ease, and spent the remainder of his days in leisure and repose.

THE END.

FACETIE.

A QUACK doctor has invented a medicine of such remarkable virtue that it will cure a ham.

Why is a married man like a candle? Because he sometimes goes out at night when he ought not to.

It is idiotic to tell a real dream. But it is convenient to invent one if you want to annoy anybody, as nobody can prove that you didn't have it.

The strongest kind of a hint is that of a young lady asking a gentleman to see if one of her rings would go on his little finger.

HARD CIDER.

" Why, dear me, Mr. Longswallow," said a good old lady, " how can you drink a whole quart of that hard cider at a single draught?"

As soon as the man could breathe again he replied :

" I beg pardon, madam, but my soul, it was so hard I couldn't bite it off."

A FARMER writes to his country paper that he cured his daughter of the Grecian bend by pouring water on her and holding her out in the sun until she warped back again.

SECRETS IN THE AIR.

An ingenious member of the Royal Irish Academy, Dr. George Sigerson, has been using the microscope to make the air we breathe give up its motes. He has analysed in this way " sea breeze," and " country air," and " drawing-room air," and " city air," if the name must be given to the foul mixture of mucus, granite-dust, quartz spicula, cotton fluff, soot particles, epithelial scales, and crystals of ammonia, which the wretched inhabitants of cities are forced to inhale by way of lung-pabulum.

No air, we find, but may be made to render up its secrets. The sea breeze shows us its health-giving crystals of chloride of sodium and sulphate of magnesia, its visible traces of iodine and bromine, if we push our questioning far enough. The country air reveals to us its fragrant treasure of daisy pollen and fungus spores, its plant crystals, its moth scales, its spermatozoids of ferns, its wax of animalcules, its

very dew-drops, one, says Dr. Sigerson, "with a lively monas disporting in it," within two hours of its gathering in its leaf-cup.

The idea is worth developing. Why, if the ordinary microscope can show us all this in the material notes of the air we breathe, should not a more powerful instrument, and a more delicate analysis, carry us a stage further, and enable us to detect in the air its subtler qualities—say the proportions of weariness, worldliness, and worship, that make up the air of Church; or the elements of patriotism and pomposity, vanity and verbosity, the filaments of red tape, and the dry dust of precedent, that blend in the air of the House of Commons? How interesting to have the air of Convocation analysed, before and after Bishop Temple's explanation, for a determination of its quantities of *odium theologicum* and latent zeal-heat, or to reduce the atmosphere that gathers like a fog over Exeter Hall platform, into its chief constituents, bitters of bigotry, and dust of declamation, and to have made palpable, through all these, that small modicum of salt of Christianity which keeps the mixture sweet enough not only for bare breathing, but even for supporting healthy existence, and propagating good works. Think of the value of an analysis of the air of a St. Pancras board-room, side by side with one of a St. Pancras sick-ward—the embodied emanations of guardian selfishness and penny wisdom by those of pauper sluttiness, starvation, and suffering.

Surely, we might all learn something to our advantage from such a making visible of that which goes out of us, such a palpable manifestation of what spirit we are.—*Punch*.

HARD TO ACCOMPLISH.

WHEN, from time to time, we read in the *Court Circular* that So-and-so was introduced to Her Majesty and delivered up his "stick of office," we invariably find ourselves wishing that some one would deliver us from those Sticks in office still to be found in the Public Service.—*Punch*.

ANYTHING FOR A CHANGE.

Artist (to Old Fellow-Student). "And what have you been doing all these years,—what are you painting?"

Swell. "Oh, I gave up painting, my dear fellow—then I took to teaching! But you can't find pupils in Genius, you know, so now I go in for Art Criticism! I know I'm strong in that! Did you see my article in this week's 'now a day'?"—*Punch*.

SAN FRANCISCO NEWS.—We learn that four tons of silkworms have been brought by one steamer from Japan to San Francisco. We shall expect more than the usual amount of floss-ophy in our next *News Letter*.—*Fun*.

PURSE-PICUTY.—A refined contemporary speaking of the conviction of a man at the Central Criminal Court for "swearing" sovereigns, described the crime as "purse-piring" gold coin.—*Fun*.

GOING FOR AN OLD SONG.—A man was discovered at Bolton the other day using an illicit still. He was fined 30*l.*, which was paying to a pretty tune—in short, the tune of "Still so gently o'er me stealing!"—*Fun*.

A CHARACTER.

Hunting Parson: "Well, George, how d'ye like the new master?"

Old-fashioned Huntsman: "Oh, he'll do, sir! seems a very pleasant sort o' gen'l'man—the very first time we was out he swar'd at me so comfortable as if 'e'd a-know'd me all his days!"—*Fun*.

"SPEAK, O SPEAK!"—Why should a person begin letters with "My dear sir," and a firm not begin with "Our dear sir?"—*Judy*.

Two bailiffs (under a mistaken impression, I assure you) entered my house the other day. In answer to inquiries, they said that "possession was nine points of the law;" so opening the door, and kicking them out, said that dispossession was the tenth.—*Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

"THE man who hesitates is lost," I am told. A little time back I refused—in fact hesitated—to accept a bill, and the consequence was, that I had the pleasure of seeing myself, not lost, but saved—at least, my money was.—*Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

HAVE I any authority for calling England the Land of *Goschen*? Certainly; for the simple reason that it holds the President of the Poor-law Board.—*Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

A SPORTIVE DEFINITION.—A CENTAUR.—A man who has "walked himself off his legs" on a horse that has "eaten its head off."—*Fun*.

"ILLS THAT FLESH IS HEIR TO."—Talk of swallowing a peck of dirt, why *Judy* knows an old gentleman who, in the course of his life, has consumed a half hundred of *coals*.—*Judy*.

OFF WITH HIS HEAD!

Really this sort of thing won't do. Such tremendously witty things are being said in the police-courts just now that something will happen. Here's Mr. Arpold actually poking fun at the Home Secre-

tary! A cab-driver was summoned to the West-minster Police Court for neglecting to deliver at a police-station, within twenty-four hours of the finding, property left in a cab. In explanation, he said that "Under the new regulations, he had been given to understand"—and Mr. Arnold, interrupting, said that "if defendant had been given to understand the new regulations, it was a great deal more than any one else had." Of course, everybody knows this is true, but the idea of a magistrate daring to say so!—*Judy*.

THE FIRST PRIMROSE.

LITTLE yellow darling,
Delicate and pale,
Can thy gentle loveliness
Brook such a wintry gale,
That nested by this rushing stream
Thy steepest like a lost sunbeam!

Little yellow darling,
At the breath of your perfume,
I sit within that quiet nook
Where many sisters bloom—
Where thou, the first of Spring's fair daughters,
Art wet with spray of dancing waters.
Such old romantic fancies
Your perfume brings to me,
Half of the proud baronial times,
And half of woodland free.
A blended vision strangely wrought
Of where I was and what I thought.
How many a joyous, moonlit walk,
And evening frolic wild,
Of which thou wert the treasure trove
While I was yet a child,
Is with thy tender beauty blent,
And wafted on thy pale pure scent!
No clouded thought of darker hours
My dreamy spirit grieves;
(Which for us all clings round some flowers,
And lurks within their leaves.)
Or meets me, greeting thee again,
To cause a gladness dashed with pain.
But days as innocent as thou,
As peacefully employed,
Which left no shadow on my brow,
I there with thee enjoyed;
And year by year thy smiles once more
Something of that bright dawn restore.
Sleep quietly, fair bud of hope,
To wake thee were a crime,
Unfold in all thy simple scope
For all the appointed time,
Some other eye than mine may bless
The teaching in thy loveliness. B. R. P.

GEMS.

THE gem cannot be polished but by friction, nor man perfected without adversity.

VICE stings us even in our pleasure, but virtue consoles us even in our pains.

SURELY some people must know themselves; they never think about anything else.

NEVER loan on the world, for if you do the world will jump aside and you will get a tumble.

A PERSON who undertakes to rise himself by scandalising others might as well sit down on a wheelbarrow and try to wheel himself.

FAST horses soon tire, and fast young men are a good deal like them. The youth that "goes it strong" at twenty will find himself at forty-five with a tombstone growing out of his head.

THEIR is nothing purer than honesty; nothing sweeter than charity; nothing warmer than love; nothing brighter than virtue, and nothing more steadfast than faith. These, all united in one mind, form the purest, the brightest, and most steadfast happiness.

STATISTICS.

THE COST OF THE ARMY IN THE COLONIES.—A return has been issued (supplementary to the Army Estimates) showing the amount included in the army estimates, 1870-71, for military purposes in the colonies, and the probable repayments by the several colonies on the same account. The totals of the cost to this country are as follow: Australia, 143,570*l.*; Canada, 696,285*l.*; Cape of Good Hope (including St. Helena and Mauritius), 365,291*l.*; China and Ceylon, 420,511*l.*; Mediterranean, 614,459*l.*; West Coast of Africa, 83,824*l.*; West Indies and Windward and Leeward Islands, 275,946*l.* In regard to repayments, nothing is expected from the West Coast of Africa, Australia, Canada, Gibraltar, and the West Indies. The Cape of Good Hope is ex-

pected to repay 13,500*l.* out of the 365,291*l.*; Ceylon, with Labuan and the Straits Settlements, 220,300*l.*; Hong Kong, 20,000*l.*; Malta, 6,200*l.*; Mauritius, 4,000*l.* The total cost of the army in the colonies to this country for the year 1870-71 is thus—2,589,886*l.*, of which amount repayments to the extent of 309,000*l.* are expected.

THE number of Turkish troops now under arms. There are 160,000 men, divided into six corps, one of which forms the guard. The six corps contain 36 regiments of four battalions and eight companies each, or a total of 100,000 men; 24 regiments of cavalry, total 17,000; six regiments of field artillery, 8,000; the engineer corps, 1,600; and a garrison artillery consisting of 5,000 men. Besides the six corps, the Porte has three detached divisions—one in Crete, one in Tripoli, and one in Tunisia. The provinces which are not subject to the common law of recruiting furnish the following contingents:—Upper Albania, 10,000; Bosnia, 30,000; Servia, 20,000; the Principalities, 7,000; Egypt, 20,000; Tunis and Tripoli, 10,000. Finally, the Sultan, when he thinks proper, can place on a war footing the irregular troops, such as the Bashi-Bazouks and the Tartars of Dabroudja. During the Crimean war there was in all a force of 220,000 men, under arms. The fleet consists of 66 steam and 63 sailing-vessels, the former including four iron-clads.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

LAMBSKIN MATS AND RABBIT FURS.—The dressing of small skins is not so laborious but that it may be undertaken by most women of ordinary industry, whilst the beauty of the finished articles adapts them for ornaments in the drawing-room, or for trimmings for the walking dress. An even number of skins should be treated at one time, the quantities here given being sufficient for four small lambskins. Make strong soapsuds, using hot water, and let it stand till cold, then wash the skins in it, carefully squeezing out all the dirt from among the wool, then wash them in cold water till all the soap is out. Next dissolve half a pound each of salt and alum in a little hot water, and put it into a tub of cold water sufficient to cover the skins, and let them soak twelve hours, then hang over a pole to drain. When well drained, stretch carefully on a board to dry. Stretch several times while drying. Before they get entirely dry, sprinkle on the flesh side one ounce each of finely-pulverised alum and saltpetre, rubbing it in well; then lay the flesh sides together and hang in the shade for two or three days, turning them over every day until perfectly dry. Finish by scraping the flesh side with a blunt knife to remove any remaining scraps of flesh, and then rub the flesh side with pumice stone and the hands.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE first land sale by the Atlantic Telegraph has been transacted by the International Land and Labour Agency, Birmingham, for a party in this town. The purchase consisted of a tract of wood and mineral land in West Virginia, containing 28,000 acres.

THE cost of material for the bronze coinage is less than 100*l.* a ton; the cost of the workmanship, by contract, is about 50*l.* a ton; and the pence are issued or sold at the price of 44*l.* a ton; showing a profit to the State of 330,000*l.*, or equal to about 10,000*l.* annually.

It is calculated that there are at present between twenty or thirty mills either entirely or very nearly stopped in Preston; that there are between 1,300 and 1,400 cottage houses "to let" in the borough; and that between 3,000 and 4,000 operatives are either altogether out of employ or working short time.

THE late fall of snow in the department of Eastern Pyrenees has been greater than any on record there. M. Naudin, in a description of the fall, read before the Academy of Sciences, says that of the olives and elms the branches were broken down and the trunks torn by the weight of the snow.

COAL IN ABUNDANCE.—At the Midland Counties Institute of Mining Engineers at Dudley, Mr. Walter Ness, a Mining engineer, read a report, from which it appears that 34 square miles of the Firth of Forth, which he blocks out, would yield an amount of coal, if properly dredged, equal to the whole produce of the collieries of Great Britain during the last fifty years; or, taking the coal-bearing area of the Firth, he anticipates that 12,672,000,000 tons might be raised; and, taking other parts of the British coast as jointly capable of yielding a similar quantity, we should then have coal to the value of 950,000,000*l.*—a sum, Mr. Ness remarks, more than sufficient to cover the national debt.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. E.—You have no legal claim upon your brother.

H. W.—Rub the parts with a mixture of spirits of turpentine and camphor.

JESSIE and her friend must make their own arrangements.

A READER should forward particulars of her age and personal appearance.

T. H. S.—The lines are exceedingly imperfect, and we must decline them.

ERINOBUS.—Be careful to adopt habits of great cleanliness, and bathe the parts in tepid water twice a day.

ANXIOUS.—You can wash the face with elder-flower water. You had better leave the hair on the lip as it is.

A LOVER OF BEER.—The skins must be well washed and dried. Then scrape them to a fine powder. The quantity is two pounds' weight to a hogshead of beer.

DELTA.—There is a lotion composed of eau-de-Cologne, two ounces; tincture of cantharides, two drachms; oil of rosemary, ten drops. Be careful not to make the skin sure.

EDGAR.—Stage-dancing can only be learned by taking lessons from a professor of the art. We are unacquainted with the actresses to whom you refer.

J. T.—A married woman whose husband has been at sea for two years, can obtain an affiliation order if she is provided with the necessary evidence. In so doing, however, she of course legally establishes an awkward fact.

ROSEBUD and LILY.—The colours of the hair are a pretty light gold, and a dark brown. It is only requisite to pay occasional visits to the hairdresser's, or for each to cut the other's sparingly now and then.

A STAFFORD SUBSCRIBER.—I. A person under age is bound by a contract which he makes for his own benefit, therefore the apprentice would have to serve the full time. 2. No. The master must strictly perform his contract, if required to do so. 3. Mr. Phelps.

A. T. (Isle of Man).—The handwriting is not unsatisfactory, but it would be improved if it were neater. Make your wants known to those with whom you are acquainted.

J. B. E. S.—An amalgam of tin is added to mercury or quicksilver when the latter is employed for silvering glass in order to make a mirror. The composition is placed on the glass by the gentle pressure of a skilled hand.

TAM O'SHANTER.—The tales you allude to have not come under our notice. We are unable to discover that there are any works the titles of which give a clue to the incidents of the period to which you refer.

PLANCHETTE.—The board used for this game can be purchased for half-a-guinea at most toy-shops. The hands when placed upon the board act upon its mechanism, and thus effects are produced which the players accept as answers to their questions.

E. H.—We have no knowledge of such a firm. Edna is one of many Saxon names whose chief meaning is translated by our word "happiness." As applied to it, it signifies "happy girl," and we trust it may be indicative of good fortune ever waiting upon you.

A. W. S.—Great relief is obtained by and taking mild aperients, such as rhubarb and sulphur, mixed with treacle. Your best plan, however, is to pay a visit to the nearest hospital, and there to describe your symptoms to the house-surgeon.

RIFLEMAN.—If water from which every particle of air has been extracted be heated above the boiling point, it will not give off much steam. But if any rough-surfaced body be dropped therein, the liquid will be instantly converted into steam, with enormous explosive force.

A. Z.—The Statute of Limitation does not apply until the lapse of six years from the time when you can prove the debtor made a promise to pay. If you can prove a promise of the above description, the date when the goods were supplied is of no importance; but if you cannot prove such a promise, then you must sue within six years after the time at which the goods were delivered.

BLUE PILL.—There is no special Latin grammar for such a purpose. The lad should learn an ordinary Latin grammar well, and construe as many Latin authors as he can find time to get through while he is at school. He will then pick up the chemist's vocabulary quickly enough during his apprenticeship.

J. D.—The magnesium-light is obtained by burning magnesium, a soft white metal procured from chloride of magnesium fused with potassium. The fusion is effected by the application of heat to potassium placed in a glass

tube with some of the chloride placed over the potassium. The lime-light is produced by the combustion of oxygen and hydrogen on a surface of lime. Your bookseller, for a shilling, will procure you an elementary work on chemistry which will explain the above processes in greater detail.

SYMPATHY.—The habit is perhaps as injurious as any bad habit can be. It is destructive of many good points of character, as well as fatal to anything approaching to robustness or vigour of health. It is especially premonitory of a want of proper candour, which often leads to untruthfulness, while it sometimes begets a craven fear which destroys all feelings of self-respect and all hope of advancement. In fact, it is as short a route as any to the abode of "Despair."

A SUBSCRIBER.—While there is nothing to prevent a person from assuming any Christian name he or she may think proper to adopt, we should say that it was hardly becoming to make a change of name at the time of Confirmation. In that ceremony the individuals concerned take upon themselves the vows which at their baptism were made for them. Thus it is seemly that at confirmation they should use the same name which was given to them at the time they were baptised.

J. P. C.—There is probably some fault in the teacher. Discontinue the covering for the cage, which perhaps makes the bird ill-tempered and obstinate. Then let a child repeat some words distinctly and constantly in the hearing of the parent, but out of its sight. Avoid too great persistency, if the bird will not learn one word try a change. Thick bread and milk is the best food. The food-pot should be of earthenware, and should be cleaned daily, and the gravel in the cage often renewed.

ST. ANTHONY.—As the colour is a compound one, you may have to make many experiments before you arrive at the precise shade required. The following solution will help you: one ounce of dragon's blood, bruised, put into a pint of oil of turpentine. The mixture must be kept in a warm place and shaken frequently. If you require a deeper colour, boil some logwood chips and apply that solution after the former.

THE FLOWER AND FAITH.

The music of the breeze is deep,
Among the sore trees flowing,
And over yonder solemn steep,
The moon is tenderly glowing:
A presence seems to throe the air,
As if a spirit tended,
And all its gentle pulses there
Were with the soft scene blended.

There is a spirit with sweet power:
My soul, responsive swelling,
Feels 'tis my daughter's with a flower
Brought from her heavenly dwelling—
A flower unseen by mortal eyes,
But making Faith still stronger,
That to be with her in the skies
I must not wait much longer.

My darling! my lost darling! thou
Dost feel I feel thy splendour;
Thus paradising heart and bower
With love so deep, so tender!
Thou art not lost! oh, no! oh, no!
Again doubt can come never,
All duly soon done here below,
I'll be with thee for ever!

W. R. W.

A. B. C.—Although your handwriting is good, you must not rest satisfied with it. There is room for much improvement. It is not probable that you will reach 6 ft. in height. A tale would take too long a time to tell if every circumstance connected with the characters were detailed. The author, in the exercise of his discretion, relates only those particulars which he considers necessary to the artistic construction of the plot and the interest of the story as a whole.

STELLA MARTININA.—A man who "talks nothing but flattery" to you is certainly not the sort of man to marry, and you very rightly desiderate instead "a man of sense." But because you may not have found one such as yet among your admirers, "the hour and the man" may both arrive when you least expect such an event. At twenty-one, with your personal endowments and prospective wealth, you should certainly not "feel sick of the world," as you say you do. Find some occupation for the mind and take exercise for the body, and the folly of such a morbid feeling will appear to you, and what is more the feeling itself will vanish.

JOHN A.—The diamond is now largely used as a tool-end for boring hard rocks, and is economical, effective, and indestructible. At first sight it would seem a costly method, but such is not the case, considering that a steel chisel was spoilt for every inch bored in a hard rock while forming the Mont Cenis tunnel through the Alps. The diamond being the hardest known substance in nature, which nothing but a blow can injure, direct wear of its surface is impossible except by means of diamond powder.

A. E., tall, dark, good looking, and in a good position. Respondent must be an amiable young lady.

HERBERT, twenty-two, fair, good looking, and in a position to keep a wife. Respondent must be about nineteen, tall, and dark.

VICTOR CARLETON, twenty-three, dark eyes, brown hair and moustache, handsome, and a gentleman with an income of \$600. a-year. Respondent must be tall, accomplished, accustomed to move in good society, and not under twenty-four or twenty-five, and fond of home.

LOTTIE, twenty-one, laughing-eyes, brown hair, rather below the medium height, loving, domesticated, and respectfully connected. Respondent must be dark, not under twenty-three or twenty-four, fond of singing, and in good circumstances.

J. H., twenty-one, 5 ft. 6 in., dark, good looking, fond of

home, and has an income of £500 per annum. Would be glad to exchange carts with a young lady of from eighteen to twenty years of age, medium height, dark, good looking, good tempered, domesticated; a tradesman's daughter preferred.

ANNIE, twenty-four, 5 ft. 6 in., dark, good looking, loving, and with a true heart. Respondent must be tall, good looking, and with a moderate income.

MAUD, nineteen, tall, bright golden hair, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be tall, dark, and named either Willie or George.

MIMIE, twenty-one, 5 ft. 4 in., dark, and domesticated. Respondent must be dark, medium height, not under twenty-one, and a tradesman.

ENGLISHMAN, thirty-nine, 5 ft 10 in., good looking, kind, and loving. Respondent should have a little money to help him in his business.

ANNIE, tall, black eyes, and handsome.

WILLIAM S., nineteen, fair, and cheerful. Respondent must be about eighteen, medium height, fair, and good looking.

PHILOLOGY (a foreigner), about thirty. Respondent must be from eighteen to twenty-two, well educated, and good looking.

LONELY JIM, forty-nine, kind, loving, and a widower with a comfortable home and no children. Respondent must be steady, religious, fond of home, with no children, and a little under his own age.

AUGUSTA VERNON, twenty-five, tall, dark, handsome, occupies a good position in society, fond of music and dancing, and has an income of £600 a year. Respondent must be dark, good looking, affectionate, fond of music and riding. Wishes to exchange carts.

A LONELY ONE would like some one to love her; is twenty-one, 5 ft. 3 in., fair, hazel eyes, good looking, domesticated, loving, has £200 a year, and good prospects.

FLYING SPRAY, twenty-six, 5 ft. 2 in., dark, hazel eyes, and wishes to settle down in life. Respondent must be dark, good looking, good tempered, and fond of home. Wishes to exchange carts.

W. H. S., twenty-three, 5 ft 11 in., dark, good looking, and is the son of a retired tradesman. Respondent must be good looking, and loving.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

PRETTY is responded to by—"R. C." twenty-nine, 5 ft. 6 in., fair, good looking, and an architect. Wishes for carts and address.

COLIN by—"Florence," amiable, educated, and qualified to make a nice little wife. Wishes to exchange carts.

GREY by—"Romance," twenty-four, fair complexion, dark hair and eyes, musical, lively, amiable, and fond of home. Wishes to exchange carts.

BEATRICE IPA by—"Lieutenant," twenty-three, 5 ft. 11 in., fair, good looking, of good family, good natured, a lieutenant in the army, has £300 a year, and will come in for 50,000 in a few years. Will be happy to exchange carts.

B. by—"E." eighteen, 5 ft. 2 in., light brown glossy curls, soft blue eyes, fair, affectionate, lady-like, a good pianist, and good tempered.

ANNIE by—"How," twenty-one, fair, 5 ft. 8 in., steady, quiet, fond of home, and a clerk with a salary of £50 a year and sure of advancement.

FAITHFUL IPA by—"Jane," twenty-seven, loving, and domesticated; and—"B. W." thirty, 5 ft. 11 in., fond of home, and able to make it comfortable.

MABEL HAMILTON by—"Clement S." twenty, tall, dark, and fond of music. Wishes to exchange carts;

"T. Y." a seaman, who wishes to obtain the lady's address; and—"Edgar F." twenty, medium height, dark, and fond of music and dancing. Wishes to exchange carts.

M. M. B. by—"Annie," seventeen, tall, fair, fond of music and dancing, and kind hearted; and—"Forget-me-not," eight, fair, fond of home and music. Wishes to exchange carts.

B. by—"Nettie," eighteen, 5 ft. 4 in., dark, and accomplished.

TOPSY by—"True Heart," twenty, employed in a City firm, and fond of poetry and music.

MIMIE by—"Harry G." twenty-three, 5 ft. 6 in., dark, and good looking. Wishes for "Minnie's" carts and address; and—"T. B. W." twenty-four, 5 ft. 6 in., and enjoying an income of £300 a year.

LIZZIE by—"H. O." thirty-nine, 5 ft. 8 in., a widower, in business for himself. Would like an appointment for a personal interview.

J. B. W. by—"Annie," fair, good looking, good tempered, and affectionate. She would like to exchange carts.

F. R. has not sent the name of the lady to whom he responds.

JAMES S. would be glad to have further particulars concerning MINNIE:

HERINETTA G. wishes for more particulars concerning WILLIAM D. C.

LOYALTY must make the selection for himself.

MARGARET G. wishes for more particulars concerning JOHN H.

FRANKLIN wishes to hear from JANE.

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